

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

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BLACK SHEEP!

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LAND AT LAST," "KISSING THE ROD," &c. &c.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER IX. CLEARED UP.

THE shock communicated to George Dallas by his step-father's letter was violent and terrible in proportion to the resolutions which had been growing up in his mind, and gaining strength and fixedness with each day's absence from the old accustomed scenes of dissipation and sources of temptation. Like all persons of similar temperament, he was easily overcome by agitation, and his eager nature led him to anticipate evil as readily as it caused him to enjoy good thoroughly. He was a strong man physically, but a sickening, weak shudder, such as might have shaken a woman, shook him as he read the few formal lines which conveyed to him so much more than their writer had known or intended. Was it all to be in vain? Was the golden time, the precious opportunity, gone by for ever? Was she to die, or to die to him at least, and never to know that his repentance had been real, that the lesson had been effectual, that the reform had been inaugurated?

The terms in which Mr. Carruthers had written to his step-son were as vague as they were formal, and the uncertainty to which the letter condemned him was as agonising as the misery which it produced. Where was she? He did not know; he had no means of knowing. How great were her sufferings? How imminent was her danger? These points were beyond the reach of his investigation. He knew that he was to blame for his mother's illness; he saw all things now in a new and clear light, and though his was no miraculous reformation, no sudden transformation from sinner to saint, but rather an evidence of mental growth and refinement under the influence of a new order of feelings, working on a singularly pliable temperament, George Dallas was so different to what he had been, that he shrank not only with disgust, but with wonder, from the contemplation of the perverse folly which had led to such results. He had always been dissipated, worthless, and ungrateful, he thought; why had he never realised the guilt of being so before? Why, indeed? Having been blind, now he saw, having been foolish, he had become wise. The ordinary experience,

after all, but which every man and woman believes in his or her case exceptional, had come to this young man, but had come laden with exceedingly bitter grief. With swift, sudden fear, too, and stinging self-distrust; for if his mother were indeed lost to him, the great motive, a real one, however tardily acknowledged, would be lost too, and then, how should he, how could he, answer for himself? Just then, in the first keenness of his suffering, in the first thrill of fear which the sense of impending punishment sent through him, he did not think of his love, he drew no strength, no counsel, no consolation from it; the only image before his mind was that of his mother, long bowed down, and now broken, under the accumulated load of grief and disappointment which he had laid upon her. Mr. Carruthers had acted characteristically, George thought, in writing to him, as he had done, merely telling him of his mother's illness and removal, but giving him no address, affording him no opportunity of writing to her. So much he had done for his own conscience' and credit's sake, not actuated by any sympathy for him. The old anger towards his step-father, the old temptation to lay the blame of all his own ill-conduct on Mr. Carruthers, to regard his banishment from Poynings as cause rather than effect, arose fiercely in George's heart, as he read the curt sentences of the letter over and over again; but they were met and conquered by a sudden softened remembrance of his mother's appeal to him for a just judgment of her husband, whom she loved, and the better nature of the young man, newly and strongly aroused, got the victory.

"No, no," he said, impetuously and aloud, "he's not to blame; the fault is mine, and if I am never to have the chance of telling her the truth, I'll tell it to myself at all events."

George's resolution to go to England was soon taken. He must know more than Mrs. Carruthers had told him, and only at Poynings could he learn it. It never occurred to him that Mrs. Brookes might have accompanied his mother abroad. His impulsive nature rarely permitted him to foresee any obstacle in the way of a design or a desire, and he acted in this instance with his usual headlong precipitation.

When George Dallas reached London, he found he would have just sufficient time to go to South Molton-street and see Routh or Harriet for a few minutes, before he could catch a

train for Amherst. Arrived at Routh's former residence, he was surprised to observe, as he got out of a hansom, that a card, displayed in the parlour window, announced "A drawing-room floor to let." The hall door was opened at his summons, with unusual alacrity, and in reply to his inquiry, the servant, a newly engaged one who had never seen him before, informed him that Mr. and Mrs. Routh had "left," and were to be found at Queen-street, Mayfair. George stood, for a moment, irresolute in surprise, and the servant repeated the address, fancying he had not heard her. His face was towards the open door, and he turned his head sharply round, as a boy's voice said, in a peculiar pert tone which had an odd indefinite familiarity for his ear:

"Any letters for Mr. Routh to-day, Mary Jane? 'cos, if so, hand 'em over."

The speaker was Mr. James Swain, who had come up behind George Dallas unperceived, and who, when he saw the young man's face, gave an involuntary start, and dropped his saucy manner on the instant.

"Yes, there's three letters and a cire'lar for Mr. Routh," replied Mary Jane, in a sulky tone; "and missis says as she hopes Mr. Routh will put his address in the paper or something, for people is always a comin' and makin' us think as they're lodgers." Then with a glance at George, which seemed to imply that he might not have been considered ineligible in that capacity, Mary Jane went to fetch the letters, and Dallas addressed Jim Swain.

"Are you going back to Mr. Routh's direct?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," answered Jim. "I come every day, since they've been gone, to see after letters and messages."

"Then you can take a message from me," said George, pointing the observation with a sixpence. "Tell Mr. Routh Mr. Dallas has come to London, having heard bad news, and has gone to his mother's house. You won't forget?"

"No, sir, I won't forget," said Jim, in a tone of satisfactory assurance.

"Say I expect to get back to-morrow, and will come to see him at once. Mr. Dallas—that's my name, remember."

George then jumped into the hansom again, and was driven away to the railway station.

"Mr. Dallas," said Jim Swain to himself as he walked slowly down the street, carrying the letters confided to him by Mary Jane—"that's your name, is it? I wonder wot you've bin up to, and where you've bin up to it? I shall tell *her* the gent's message—not *him*."

The night had fallen upon the woods and fields of Poynings, and no light gleamed from the stately old house, save one ray, which shone through the open window of the housekeeper's room. By the casement sat George Dallas, his arm upon the window-sill, his head leaning against his hand, the cool fresh air of the summer night coming gratefully to his flushed and heated face. Opposite, and close to him, sat Mrs. Brookes, still wearing, though their conference had lasted many hours, the look of agi-

tation beyond the strength to bear it which is so painful to see on the faces of the aged. All had been explained between the old woman and the prodigal son of her beloved mistress, and the worst of her fears had been dispelled. George had not the guilt of murder on his soul. The chain of circumstances was indeed as strong as ever, but the old woman did not retain the smallest fear. His word had reassured her—indeed, the first glance at his face, in the midst of the terror and surprise of their meeting, had at once and for ever put her apprehensions to flight. Innocence of *that*, at least, was in his face, in his hurried agitated greeting, in the bewilderment with which he heard her allusion to her letter, in his total unconsciousness of the various emotions which tore her heart among them. She saw, she foresaw, no explanation of the circumstances which had led to the fatal mistake she had made; she saw only that her boy was innocent, and the vastness, the intensity, of the relief sufficed, in the first moments of their meeting, to deprive it of the horror and bitterness with which, had she had any anticipation of such an event, she would have regarded it. But the first relief and the full explanation—all that George had to tell her, all she had to tell him—could not change the facts as regarded Mrs. Carruthers, could not alter the irrevocable, the miserable past.

When the first confusion, excitement, and incoherent mutual questioning had given way to a more settled and satisfactory conversation, Mrs. Brookes told George all that had occurred—the visit of the official gentleman from London, the servants' version of his business, the interview between Mr. Carruthers and Evans, and the suspicion and fear, only too reasonable, to which all the unfortunate circumstances had given rise.

It was with the utmost difficulty that George arrived at a clear understanding of the old woman's narrative, and came to realise how overwhelming was the presumption against him. By degrees he began to recal the circumstances which had immediately preceded and followed his clandestine visit to Poynings. He recalled the remarks he had heard at The Mercury office; he remembered that there had been some talk of a murder, and that he had paid no attention to it, but had gone away as soon as possible, and never given the matter another thought. To find himself implicated in a crime of so terrible a nature, to find that circumstances had brought him in contact with such a deed, filled him with horror and stupefaction; to know that his mother had been forced to conceive such a suspicion was, even without the horrible addition of the effect produced on her, suffering far greater than any he had ever known. He felt giddy, sick, and bewildered, and could but look piteously at his faithful old friend, with a white face and wild haggard eyes.

"She believed it?" he said again and again.

"No, George, no; she only feared it, and she could not bear the fear; no wonder, for I could hardly bear it, and I am stronger than she is, and not your mother, after all. But just think,

George. You bought the coat from Evans, and the man who wore that coat was seen in the company of the murdered man the last time he was seen alive. I knew there must be some dreadful mistake. I knew you never lifted your hand against any man's life, and that some one else must have got possession of the coat; but your mother said no, that you had worn it when she saw you at Amherst, and nothing could remove the impression. George, what did you do with the coat you bought at Evans's?"

"I had it down here, sure enough," answered George, "and I did wear it when she last saw me. I left it at Mr. Routh's afterwards, by mistake, and took one of his abroad with me; but this is a horrid mystery altogether. Who is the man who has been murdered? What is the motive?"

"I cannot tell you that, George," said Mrs. Brookes; "but I will give you the papers, and then you will know all, and you will understand how much she suffered."

The old woman left George alone for a few minutes, while she went to her bedroom to get the newspapers which she locked securely away at the bottom of a trunk. During her absence the young man strode about the room distractedly, trying in vain to collect his thoughts and set them down steadily to the solution of the terrible mystery which surrounded him.

"Here they are, George," said Ellen, as she entered the room and handed him a roll of newspapers. "Sit down here, by the window, and try to read them quietly. I must leave you now, and tell the servants who you are, and that you are going to stay here to-night—there must be no concealment now; thank God, it's not wanted any longer. Perhaps out of all this evil good may come, my boy."

He had sat down by the window, and was eagerly opening the roll of paper, and seeking the account of the murder. Mrs. Brookes paused by his side for a moment, laid her withered hand gently on his hair, and then left him. A moment after he started up from his chair, and cried out:

"Good God! the man was Deane!"

The shock of this discovery was extreme. Wholly unable as he had been to account for the coincidence which Mrs. Brookes's imperfect story (for, like most persons of her class, she was an unskilful narrator of facts) had unfolded to him, he had never supposed his connexion with it real, and now he saw it all, and in a moment perceived the gravity of his situation. The nameless man whom he had seen so often, and yet known so slightly; concerning whom he had speculated often and carelessly; whom no one had recognised; whose singular dress the waiter at the tavern had described in his evidence; the date; all was conclusive. The man murdered was Deane. But who was the murderer? How was it that no one had recognised the body? With all his mysterious ways, in spite of the callous selfishness which had rendered him indifferent to companionship save in the mere pursuit of his pleasures, it seemed wonderful that no one should have been able to identify him.

"There's Routh, now," said George to himself, "he must have heard of the finding of the body, he must have read the description of the dress; he may have seen the man's fur coat before, though I never did. To be sure, he did not dine with us that day, but he knew where Deane dined, and with whom. What can Routh have been about?"

These and a thousand questions of a similar nature George Dallas put to himself, without finding any answer to them, without stilling the tumult in his mind. He tried to arrange the circumstances in their order of occurrence, and to think them out, but in vain; he could not do so yet: all was confusion and vague horror. He had not liked this man. Theirs had been the mere casual association of convenience and amusement—an association, perhaps, the foremost of all those which he was firmly determined never to renew; and yet he could not regard its dreadful ending with indifference. The life which had perverted George had not hardened him, and he could not readily throw off the impression created by the discovery that the man with whom he had joined in the pursuit of reckless and degrading pleasure had died a violent death within so short a time of their last meeting. When Mrs. Brookes came into the room again, the expression of the young man's face terrified her afresh.

"Ellen," he said, "this is a dreadful business, apart from my unhappy complication with it, and what it has cost my dear mother. I knew this unhappy man; he was a Mr. Deane. I dined with him at that tavern in the Strand. I did wear that coat. All the circumstances are correct, though all the inferences are false. I begin to understand it all now; but who can have murdered him, and for what motive, I cannot conceive. The most natural thing in the world was that they should suspect me, as the man who wore the coat. Mr. Evans will recognise me, no doubt, as he told Mr. Carruthers."

"No, no, George; the poor old man is dead," interrupted Mrs. Brookes.

"Dead?" said George. "Well, he seemed an honest fellow, and I am sorry for it; but it makes no difference in my position. When I communicate with the police, I will admit all he could prove."

"Must you do that, George?" asked Mrs. Brookes, wistfully. She had a natural dread of the law in the abstract.

"Of course I must, nurse; I can tell them who the unfortunate man was, and account for him up to a very late hour on the night of the seventeenth of April."

"Take care, George," said the old woman. "If you can't account for yourself afterwards, you can't clear yourself."

The observation was shrewd and sensible. George felt it so, and said, "Never mind that. I am innocent, and when the time comes I shall have no difficulty in proving myself innocent."

"You know best, George," said the old woman, with a resigned sigh; "but tell me, who was this poor man?"

"Sit down and I will tell you all about it."

Then George seated his old friend close beside him, and told her the whole story of his intercourse with Stewart Routh, of his knowledge of Deane, his last meeting with him, their dinner together, the adjournment to the billiard-rooms, the money won by Dallas from Deane, and his leaving town early the next morning for Amherst.

"That was the day they found the body, was it not?" asked Mrs. Brookes.

"Let me see," said George; and he again referred to the newspapers.

"Yes, it was on Friday, the eighteenth—in the evening. I was down at Amherst then, nurse; that was the day I saw my mother last."

He sighed, but a smile stole over his face also. A cherished memory of that day abode in his heart.

Then Mrs. Brookes questioned George concerning Routh and his wife, and told him of Harriet's visit, and all the emotion and fear which it had caused her. George was touched and grateful.

"That was like her," he said; "she is the truest of friends, a treasure among women. I wonder she did not write to me, though, when she sent on Mr. Carruthers's letter."

The observation passed unnoticed by Mrs. Brookes. Had she asked when the letter had reached George, a discovery, dangerous to the interests of Harriet and Routh, might have been made; but she had very dim notions of continental places and distances, and the time consumed in postal transmission.

"They knew this poor man; did they not know that he was the murdered person?"

"No," said George, "they had no notion of it. How shocked they will be when I tell them of it! Routh will be the best person in the world to tell me how to go about communicating with the police authorities. But now, Ellen, tell me about my mother."

Time went over, and the night fell, and the old woman and the young man still talked together, and she tried to comfort him, and make him believe that all would be well. But George was slow to take such comfort—full of remorse and self-condemnation, of gloom and foreboding. The mercurial temperament of the young man made him a bad subject for such suspense and self-reproach, and though he had no shadow of fear of any trouble to come to him from the evidence on the inquest, there was a dull brooding sense of apprehension over him, against which he had no power, no heart, to strive. So he listened to the story of his mother's illness and departure, the physicians' opinions, and Mr. Carruthers's plans for her benefit and comfort, and darker and darker fell the shadow upon his heart.

"We have had no news since they left Paris," said Mrs. Brookes, in conclusion, "but I expect to see Miss Carruthers to-morrow. She will have a letter from her uncle."

"Miss Carruthers!" said George, lifting up his head with renewed animation. "Has she not gone abroad with them?"

"No," said Mrs. Brookes; "she is staying

at the Sycamores, Sir Thomas Boldero's place. Sir Thomas is her uncle on the mother's side. She rides over very often to see me, and I expect her to-morrow."

"At what hour does she generally come?" asked George.

"In the afternoon; after lunch."

"Well, I shall be in London by that time, nurse; so there is no danger of my incurring my step-father's wrath this time by an encounter with the heiress."

There was a momentary touch of bitterness in George's voice, but his slow sad smile contradicted it.

"Ah, George!" said the old woman. "Take heart. All will be well, and the time will come when you will be welcome here."

"Perhaps so, nurse. In the mean time, you will let me know what news Miss Carruthers brings, and especially where my mother is, and their next move."

That night George Dallas slept for the first time under the roof of the old house at Poynings; but an early hour in the morning found him on his way back to town.

When Clare Carruthers, mounted on Sir Lancelot and escorted by Cæsar, arrived at Poynings, on the following afternoon, she was surprised to find Mrs. Brookes looking well and cheerful. The girl had brought good news. Mrs. Carruthers had borne the journey well, and it was proposed that she should leave Paris and proceed to the south of France after the interval of a week. Clare roamed over the house and gardens as usual. She was beautiful as ever, but with a new and graver beauty than of old. There was no observant eye to mark the change, no kindred spirit to note and share the girl's trouble. She was quite alone. When she returned from her ramble, and while her horse was being brought round, she went to Mrs. Brookes's room to bid her good-bye. The old woman took two letters out of her desk, and said:

"Do you remember these letters, Miss Carruthers? You brought them to me when Mrs. Carruthers was first taken ill."

"Yes, I remember. What of them?" Clare answered, carelessly.

"Will you have the kindness to enclose them in a large envelope, and direct them to Mr. George Dallas for me?"

"Certainly," said Clare; but she looked a little surprised, for Mrs. Brookes wrote remarkably well for a person of her class.

"I wrote to him lately," said Mrs. Brookes, "and the letter did not reach him; so I suppose I directed it indistinctly."

Clare sat down at the table, and in a large bold hand wrote the address which Harriet had given upon the envelope.

"You are sending Mr. Dallas these letters that he may read them, as his mother is unable?" asked Clare, to whom the forbidden subject of Mrs. Carruthers's son always offered more or less temptation.

"Yes, ma'am," replied the old woman; "I am pretty sure they come from Mr. Felton, and ought to be seen to."

"And who is Mr. Felton?" said Clare, rising and laying down her pen. "I'll post them as I pass through the village," she added.

"Mr. Felton is Mrs. Carruthers's brother," said Mrs. Brookes. "He has been in America many years, but she said something lately about his coming home."

Clare said no more, but took her leave, and went her way. She posted the packet for George Dallas at the village, and, as she rode on, her fair face bore the impress of a painful recollection. She was thinking of the morning on which she had ventured to send the warning to him who was so unworthy of the fancies she had cherished—him of whom she could not think without a shudder, of whom she hardly dared to think at all. When the post was delivered the following morning at the Sycamores, a large packet was placed before Miss Carruthers. It was directed to her, and contained two numbers of *The Piccadilly*, with two instalments of George's serial story, and on the fly leaf of one were the words, "From Paul Ward."

CHAPTER X. ONCE MORE TIDED OVER.

AN air of respectability and the presence of good taste characterised the house in Queen-street, Mayfair, now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Routh. These things were inseparable from a dwelling of Harriet's. She had the peculiar feminine talent for embellishing the place she lived in, however simple and small were the means at her disposal. The lodgings at South Molton-street had never had the comfortless look and feeling of lodgings, and now there was apparently no lack of money to make the new home all that a house of its size and capabilities need be. Harriet moved about her present dwelling, not as she had moved about her former home, indeed, with happy alacrity, but with the same present judgment, the same critical eye; and though all she did now was done mechanically, it was done thoroughly.

Harriet was very restless on the day that was to bring George Dallas to their new residence. She had duly received his message from Jim Swain, and though the keen eye of the boy, who was singularly observant of her in every particular that came under his notice, had detected that the intelligence imparted a shock to her, she had preserved her composure wonderfully, in conveying the unwelcome news to her husband. Routh had received it with far less calmness. He felt in a moment that the delay of Harriet's projected letter, a delay prescribed by himself, had induced the return of Dallas, and, angry with himself for the blunder, he was angry with her that she had not foreseen the risk. He was often angry with Harriet now; a strange kind of dislike to her arose frequently in his base and ungrateful heart, and the old relations between them had undergone a change, unavowed by either, but felt keenly by both. The strength of character on which Routh knew he could rely to any extent, which he knew would never fail him or its owner, made him strangely afraid, in the midst of all the con-

fidence it inspired, and he was constrained in his wife's presence, and haunted out of it.

Stewart Routh had never been a rough-spoken man; the early tradition of his education had preserved him from the external coarseness of a vagabond life, but the underlying influences of an evil temper asserted themselves at times. Thus when Harriet told him gently, and with her blue eyes bright with reassuring encouragement, that Dallas was in England, and would be with them on the morrow, he turned upon her with an angry oath. She shrank back from him for a moment, but the next, she said, gently:

"We must meet this, Stewart, like all the rest, and it can be done."

"How?" he said, rudely; "how is it to be met?"

"I will meet it, Stewart," she replied. "Trust me: you have often done so, and never had cause to regret the consequence. I am changed, I know. I have not so much quickness and readiness as I had, but I have no less courage. Remember what my influence over George Dallas was; it is still unchanged; let me use it to the utmost of my ability. If it fails, why then," she spoke very slowly, and leaned her hand heavily on his shoulder with the words, "then we have but to do what I at least have always contemplated."

Their eyes met, and they looked steadily at each other for some moments; then withdrawing his gaze from her with difficulty, Routh said, sullenly, "Very well, let it be so; you must see him first; but I suppose I shall have to see him; I can't escape that, can I?"

She looked at him with a queer glance for a moment, and the shadow of a smile just flickered over her lips. Could he escape? That was his thought, his question. Did she ever ask it for herself? But the impression, irresistible to the woman's keen perception, was only momentary. She answered the base query instantly.

"No, you cannot; the thing is impossible. But I will see him first, and alone; then if I succeed with him, no risk can come of your seeing him; if I fail, the danger must be faced."

He turned sulkily away, and leaned upon the window-frame, looking idly into the street.

"You don't know when he will be here, I suppose?" he said, presently.

"I do not; but I fancy early in the day."

"It's too bad. I am sick of this. The thing is over now. Why is it always cropping up?"

He spoke to himself rather than to her; but she heard him, and the colour flew over her pale face at his words. He left the room soon after, and then Harriet sat down in the weary way that had become habitual to her, and murmured:

"It is done and over; and he wonders why it is always cropping up. And I——"

Stewart Routh did not return home until late that night. Such absences had become common now, and Harriet made no comment then or ever. How she passed the hours of solitude he did not inquire, and, indeed, she could hardly have told. On this particular evening she had employed herself on the close and attentive perusal of a number of letters. They were all

written by George Dallas, and comprised the whole of his correspondence with her. She read them with attentive eye and knitted brow; and when she locked the packet up in her desk again, she looked, as Mrs. Brookes had seen her, like a woman who had a purpose, and who clearly saw her way to its fulfilment.

But the next day Harriet was restless. She could do the thing that lay before her, but she wanted the time for doing it to be come; she wanted to get it over. If this were weakness, then in this Harriet was weak.

Immediately after breakfast, Stewart Routh went out. Only a few words had been exchanged between him and Harriet on the subject of George's expected visit, and Harriet had gone to the drawing-room when George came. She met him with the old frank welcome which he remembered so well, and, in answer to his inquiry for Routh, said she was momentarily expecting him.

"You know what brought me back to England," George said, when he was seated, and the first greeting was over; "you got my message?"

"That bad news had reached you. Yes," replied Harriet. "I was just about to write to you. You would have had my letter to-day. I learned from the newspapers that your mother was ill, and—"

"And went to see about it for me. I know all your goodness, Mrs. Routh, and can never thank you for it half enough. It is only of a piece, though, with all your goodness to me. You have always been the best and truest of friends. My old nurse told me all about your visit. God bless you, Mrs. Routh." And George Dallas took her hand, and, for the second time in his life, kissed it.

There was a pause, a dangerous pause. Harriet felt it, for her heart was beating thickly, and her face was not under such command but that the interested eyes which were looking into it might read the traces of a deep and painful emotion.

"You have been comforted by your visit to Poynings," she said. "You have more hope and relief about your mother? Mrs. Brookes has told you all particulars."

"Yes, Mrs. Routh, I did hear all the particulars, and I also made an extraordinary and terrible discovery in connexion with that illness."

"Indeed!" said Harriet, leaning towards him with the liveliest interest and concern in every feature of her face. "It is not that the illness is of a hopeless nature, I hope?"

"I trust not," he said, solemnly; "but, Mrs. Routh, my mother has been nearly killed by being obliged to suspect me of a dreadful crime."

"A dreadful crime! You, Mr. Dallas! What do you mean?"

"I mean," said Dallas, "that a murder has been committed, in which I would appear to have been implicated. I know what I am about to tell you will agitate and distress you, Mrs. Routh, and one of the most mysterious points of a mysterious subject is, that it should be my lot to tell it to you." He hesitated, then went

on: "I don't know whether I ought to tell you all that I have heard. I have to consult Routh on some important matters, so that it is the more unfortunate that he is out of the way, as no time must be lost in what I have to do."

The occasion had come now, and Harriet was equal to it. It was with a smile, serious but quite unembarrassed, that she said:

"Don't depose me from the position of your confidant, George." She called him by his christian name for the first time. "You know Stewart has no secret from me. Whatever you would tell to him, tell to me. I have more time at your disposal than he has, though not more friendship. In this matter, count us as one. Indeed," she added, with a very skilful assumption of playfulness, which did not, however, alter the gravity of George's manner, "as I am your correspondent, I claim precedence by prescriptive right."

"I hardly know how to tell you, Mrs. Routh; all the circumstances are so shocking, and so very, very strange. You and Routh have been rather surprised, have you not, by the sudden disappearance of Deane? Routh always thought him an odd, eccentric, unaccountable sort of fellow, coming nobody knew whence, and likely to go nobody knew whither; but yet it has surprised you and Routh a little that, since the day we were to have dined together in the Strand, Deane has never turned up, hasn't it?"

The strength and self-control which formed such striking features in Harriet's character were severely tried, almost beyond their limits, by the expectation of the revelation which George was about to make; but there was not a questioning tone in her voice, not a quiver on her lip, as the minutes passed by, while she won him more and more securely by her calm interest and friendliness. His growing anxiety to see Routh confirmed her in the belief that he knew all that his mother and Mrs. Brookes had known. Remembering the agony she had suffered when she and George had last talked together, and feeling that the present crisis was scarcely less momentous, she rallied all her powers—and they were considerable—and asked him boldly what it was he had to communicate to her. In a voice of the deepest solemnity, he said, taking her hand in his:

"The man who has been murdered, of whose murder my mother was led to suspect me, was Philip Deane!"

"Good God!" cried Harriet, and shrank back in her chair, covering her face with her hands.

He had reason to say that the news he had to tell her would agitate and distress her. Her whole frame crept and trembled, and a chill moisture broke out on her smooth forehead and pale shivering cheeks. George was alarmed at her distress, and she knew by the intensity of her emotion, now that the words she had been expecting were spoken, how much her nervous system had suffered in the long struggle she had fought out with such success. He tried to calm her, and loved and admired her all the more for her keen womanly feeling.

"Horrible, most horrible!" she murmured, her

eyes still hidden in her shaking hands. "But how do you know? Tell me all you know."

Then George told her without omission or reservation. She listened eagerly, greedily, and as the narrative proceeded she became quite calm. George dwelt on his astonishment that Routh had not made the discovery which had forced itself upon him, but Harriet disposed of that part of the matter in a moment.

"You forget," she said, "he was not in London. When you came to me, on your return from Amherst, do you not remember I told you Stewart was away, hiding from his creditors, poor fellow? He never heard of the murder very likely; he never interests himself in such horrors. Indeed, he never mentioned anything about it to me, and of course he must have known at once that the man was Deane. The very name of the tavern in the Strand where he was to have dined himself, would have suggested the idea."

"Precisely so," said George; "that was the thing which puzzled me so completely, and made me anxious to see him."

"The strangeness of the coincidence," said Harriet, "is as remarkable as the event is horrible. It only proves how mistaken are our notions of the laws of chance. What could be more wildly improbable than that, living in the midst of London, and within constant reach of the talk and speculation about it, Stewart and I should have known nothing of the matter?"

"Very extraordinary indeed," said George; "one of those facts which would be denounced as too unnatural, if they were told in fiction. And how unfortunate! What a terrible mystery Routh might have cleared up!"

"And yet," Harriet replied, with a furtive glance at Dallas, full of keen and searching expression, "what could he have told, beyond the fact that he had known the man under the name of Deane? After all, it comes to that, and to no more, doesn't it?"

"To no more, my dear Mrs. Routh? To a great deal more. When we tell the police what we know, there will be not only an identification of the body, but an explanation of the motive."

"I don't quite understand you," said Harriet; and as she spoke, there came a click in her throat, as there had come when she and George Dallas had last spoken together.

Would it ever be over? Should her purpose ever be gained?

"Don't you?" said George, surprised, "and you so quick, too. But no wonder you are upset by this; it is so dreadful when one has known the person, is it not? But you *will* see in a moment that our being able to depose to the large sum of money and the jewels in the poor fellow's possession will make the motive quite plain. They have got a notion now that he was a foreigner, and that the motive was political, whereas it was of course simply a robbery. He resisted, I suppose, and was killed in the scuffle."

"Does the report read like that?" asked Harriet, faintly.

"It simply says he was stabbed," said

George; "but it is plain that all the newspapers took up the political-murder notion at once, and then, of course, their reports would be made to fit their theory. No doubt some ruffian did it who knew that he had a large sum about him that day. Very likely he had been traced from the City; he had been there to get some securities. I can swear to his having told me that, at all events. How very ill you look, Mrs. Routh. This ghastly story has been too much for you. I don't think you ever liked poor Deane, but no one could know of a man's coming to such an untimely end, if he was ever such a bad fellow, and not feel it, especially you. I wish I had not said anything. It would have been better for Routh to have told you this."

"No, no," said Harriet. "Indeed it is better that I should hear it from you, and you are mistaken in supposing I am so much overcome entirely on account of—on account of—"

"The murder? Yes?" asked George, looking anxiously at her.

"It is all dreadful; no one in the world can feel it to be more dreadful than I do," said Harriet, earnestly.

As she spoke she rose from her chair, pushed her hair off her forehead, and began to walk slowly up and down the room. George sat still, following her with his eyes, and noting, in all his excitement and perturbation of spirit, the change which a few weeks had made in her appearance.

"I am grieved and troubled for you, George. I see in this serious results for you, and I think more of them."

"For me, Mrs. Routh? What can happen for me in this matter that has not already happened? My mother has suffered all she can suffer. Time may or may not restore her. Surely the follies and sins of my life have been heavily punished. Nothing can undo all this misery; but nothing can be added to it either. I have only to set the mystery at rest."

"Take care, George," said Harriet, earnestly; "I am not sure of that. Let us look at the case in all its bearings. Nothing that you have to tell can contradict the evidence given at the inquest, and which directs suspicion against you. You did dine with this wretched man; you did leave the tavern in his company; you did wear the coat to which the waiter swears."

"Ah, by-the-by," said George, "that was the coat I left at your house. Where is it, Mrs. Routh? It must be produced, of course."

He did not yet perceive that she was trying to shake his determination; but she answered his question with truly wonderful carelessness. "The coat; oh yes, I remember. You wrote to me about it. It must be here, of course, unless it has been lost in the flitting from South Molton-street. He tells me a lot of his things have gone astray."

"Well," said George, "that's easily found out. Pray go on, Mrs. Routh. You were saying—"

"I was saying, George, that when you put together all the strange coincidences in this matter which have led, naturally it must be

said, to such a conclusion as that the man who wore the coat which you bought at Amherst is the criminal whom the police want to arrest—I think you would find it very difficult to prove that you are not the man!"

"Good God! You are not serious," cried George.

"I am perfectly serious," she answered. "How can you prove it? How do I, at this moment, know in a manner which I could demonstrate to legal satisfaction that you are not the man who did the deed?"

George looked at her in astonishment.

"Of course I do know it—that is, I believe it, which is quite a different thing; but supposing I did not believe it, supposing my mind were not made up about it, how would you propose to rove it to me? Tell me that, and then the strength of my argument, the value of my advice, will become evident to you, I think."

Still George looked at her, and his colour rose. He was unaccountably embarrassed by the question. The whole thing had appeared to him as simple for him as it was terrible for Deane, when Harriet began to speak. It bore a very different aspect now.

"I—I should prove that I parted with Deane, that night, at the door of the billiard-rooms where we had been playing."

"Outside the door or inside, before witnesses or alone?" interrupted Harriet.

"Why, it certainly was outside the door, and we were alone."

"Exactly. Then your having parted with him that night is just what you cannot prove; and as you cannot prove that, you can prove nothing. Let me repeat to you your own account of that night's proceedings, and you will see that you can prove nothing to outweigh the presumptive evidence against you. You told me this wretched man had money about him which he boasted of; therefore, you knew he was a rich prey. You had no money—only a few shillings at least; you went to your lodgings that night, and left them without notice on the following morning, having paid your landlady with a ten-pound note that had been in this man's possession. How can you account for that? You went to Amherst, where you remained, alone, under a feigned name, for four days; you returned to London, where, it can be proved, the occurrence was, at the time, a topic of general discussion, late at night. You went abroad the following morning, and at Amsterdam you offered certain valuable diamonds for sale. The diamonds are your mother's, you say, and formed part of a bracelet given to you by her."

"No, no," said George; "I never would explain that under any circumstances."

Harriet smiled, but the steadfast earnestness of her manner was not lessened by the smile, which was just a little contemptuous.

"That is precisely what you would be forced to explain," she continued. "Certain diamond ornaments were among the articles in the possession of the murdered man, says the newspaper report," she pointed to the passage with

a steady hand. He read it, and listened in silence, his face grave and anxious.

"You must account for the diamonds which you sold at Amsterdam; how are you to prove, otherwise, that they are not those the wretched man wore when he was seen in your company?"

"I remember his studs and his ring," said George, in a low, agitated voice. "I wonder they have not been traced."

Harriet did not reply for a moment; and the click in her throat was painfully hard and audible, as she said at length:

"They would have been broken up, of course; and remember, George, they were unset diamonds you sold at Amsterdam."

George Dallas leaned his elbows on the table, and his head on his hands. He looked at Harriet, and her face changed when his gaze was removed—changed to a look of sharp, terrible anxiety, to all the intentness of one pleading in a desperate cause.

"You must tell the story of your visit to Amherst; you must tell the truth about your mother and the jewels; moreover, you must prove it. Can your mother do that for you?"

"No," said George, drearily; "but my old nurse can."

"How? Did she see you on the Friday, when you arrived at Amherst? Did she see you at all until the Monday? Could she swear you were at Amherst in the interval? And, supposing she could, what would it avail? Look here, George, this man's body was found on Friday evening, the eighteenth of April, and the presumption is that it had been a night and a day in the river. Do you see what this means?" She put her hand on his shoulder, and grasped it securely. He shrank from her light fingers; they hurt his flesh as though they had been steel bars. She struck the newspaper lying open on the table with the other hand, and said, with a desperate effort, "It means this, George: The man was found on Friday; but the deed was done on Thursday night—done, of course, after you left him; but who can prove that? He was seen alive in your company late on Thursday night, and he was never seen alive again. The hours of that night must be accounted for, George, if you are to prove yourself guiltless. How can you account for them after the time the waiter saw you leave the tavern together?"

George did not answer. She caught her breath and went on, fixing on him a sideway look of intense anxiety.

"Can any of the people at the billiard-rooms prove at what hour you left them? Can any one at your former lodgings prove at what hour you reached home that night?"

"I don't think we left any one after us at the billiard-room but the marker," George replied. "By the way, how extraordinary that he did not come forward at the inquest. He must have noticed Deane's odd appearance, and his diamond studs and things, I should think."

"One would think so," said Harriet; "but I dare say the foreign look is commonly enough seen in such places. Still the coat must have

been very conspicuous. I forget whether you said you were in the habit of going to those particular billiard-rooms."

"I did not say anything about it, Mrs. Routh. I never was there but that once. It is very odd, as you say, about Deane's coat, but the poor man hadn't it on. After we left the tavern, I said it was an odd, un-English kind of coat, and too warm, I should think, for the weather; but he said he had 'the shakes' that day—Yankee for ague, you know—and had never worn it before in this country. He carried it over his arm, I remember, the cloth side out, and threw it into a corner of the billiard-room. I dare say no one saw it."

"Had he put it on when you parted with him?" asked Harriet.

"No," said George; "he was still carrying it over his arm, and I remember now that I said to him, 'You had better button that trapper's wrap of yours over all that money you've been staggering under the weight of.' 'Lightened a little, old fellow, by you,' he said, though he had paid his losses in a note, not in gold."

Harriet's face was less anxious now.

"Poor fellow!" George went on, with a slight shudder; "how dreadful it is—such light words, too, as we parted with. When he handed me the note, he asked for pen and ink, and wrote his name upon it, in full, over some initials—A. F., I think—and told me a queer story about an old lady who always endorsed her notes with her name, residence, and the date of her birth, and how he once traced a forgery by a bank-note, purporting to come from her, being devoid of those eccentric inscriptions. He was telling me the story as we went out."

George's discursive fancy had wandered from his own position to the circumstances which invested Deane's fate with additional sadness to his mind. Harriet frowned angrily at this proof of his invincibly light nature, and went on sharply:

"All this adds strength to my argument. But I asked you another question. Did any one in the house you lodged at know at what hour you went home that night? Is any one in a position to prove it?"

"No," said George. "I let myself in with a latch-key, and made no noise. I never did, when I could help it, there, the old woman was such a Tartar."

"Then there is not a flaw in my argument, George," she said, in a sweet, solemn tone, which, from the first time he had heard it, had had an irresistible charm for the young man; "there is nothing to be gained for any one, for any conceivable interest that you are bound to consider, for any interest, indeed, except the abstract one of the law, in telling what you know of this matter."

"The man's friends," remonstrated George, who, habitually submissive to her, did not recoil at the suggestion, as he would infallibly have recoiled had it come from any other person; "they may not know, they may be in suspense, in misery."

"I hardly think so," said Harriet, and her

blue eyes had their coldest colour, and her sweet voice its subtlest inflection of scorn. "Did you ever hear him mention relative or friend? Did you ever know a man so cold, so callous, so base, so shamelessly devoid of any interest save in his own pleasure or his own gain? Did you ever know one so narrow-hearted, so mean-spirited, of so crafty and cruel a nature?" Her energy quite startled George. She was looking straight before her, and her hand was raised as though she were tracing a picture as her mind produced it. "The man was a reptile, George—a cruel snake in his nature. I don't believe any one on earth ever loved him, except his mother in his babyhood. I hope she's dead; yes, I trust she's dead! And that you should peril your safety, drag your mother's name into the police-courts, arouse all the anger, stab all the pride, of your step-father, ruin, or at least greatly injure, your own prospects, by the revelations you will be forced to make, supposing (which, I confess, I think most difficult and improbable) you do prove your own innocence, seems to me utterly monstrous and irrational. Remember, you can give justice only negative assistance. If you prove that Deane was the victim, and you not the criminal, you can't tell them who the criminal is, or give them any information about Deane."

"No," said George, very quickly; "but then, you know, Routh can."

Harriet dropped her hand off his shoulder, and fell into a chair.

"You are overdone, Mrs. Routh," George said, tenderly, as he took her hand in his, and resumed his old manner of deferential affection. "You have talked too long and too much about this murder, and it has been too much for you. I ought to have seen that before. We won't say another word about it, until I have consulted Routh. How shocked he will be! I will think of all you have said; but I will do nothing to-day. I can't even wait to see him now, for I must get down to The Mercury office by four. I must leave you now."

"You are sure you will do nothing until we have seen you again?" Harriet said, faintly. "George, let nothing induce you to mention the matter at The Mercury. Only think of the god-send a hint would be to them."

"I'll take care," said George. "I will not stir in the matter till I have talked it over thoroughly with you."

"You will stay here, George, of course," said Harriet, kindly, holding out her hand, but without rising. "We have a room at your disposal now, you know."

"Thank you, Mrs. Routh, I will; but I don't think I shall be more than a day or two in London, unless I should be detained by this sad business."

"Are you going back to Amsterdam?" asked Harriet.

"No," said George; "I am going to my mother."

"I was right," Harriet said, when she was alone, as she lay back in her chair, pale and ex-

hausted. "I thought the one strong motive, the motive which, though late aroused, has been strong enough to save George Dallas from himself, would be powerful now. Twice his mother has helped, has saved, at his expense, his worst, his involuntary enemy. There was nothing else to work upon, but that has succeeded."

Harriet was right to a certain extent, but not quite right. Another motive had helped the end she desired to gain, and George named it to his own heart as he walked down to The Mercury office by the name of Clare Carruthers.

"You are a wonderful woman, Harry," said Routh, when Harriet had concluded the brief statement into which she condensed her report of the interview between herself and George. But, though he spoke in a tone of strong admiration, and his face relaxed into a look of intense relief, he did not hold her in his arms and kiss her passionately now. "You are a wonderful woman, and this danger is escaped."

She smiled a little bitterly, very sadly, as she said:

"I don't know. At all events, it is once more tided over."

JONATHAN MARTIN.

ACCIDENT brought before me, the other day, an extraordinary picture, which I received from the hands of Jonathan Martin, at the time of his confinement in York City Jail. It represents the vision which he assured me had induced him to set fire to the Minster, and has recalled to my mind—what may not be unworthy of record—some of the extraordinary hallucinations associated with Jonathan Martin's history. He died in Bedlam, where, as also during his incarceration in the Castle at York, I had opportunities of conversing with him.

The emphatic eulogium may be deemed extravagant which a great authority has pronounced on his brother, John Martin the painter, as "the meekest, the most lofty, the most permanent, the most original genius of his age," his works exhibiting "the divine intoxication of a great soul lapped in majestic and unearthly dreams," the representation of "the most august and authentic inspiration;"* yet some of the characteristics which undoubtedly distinguished John may be traced in a coarser, wilder, and more extravagant shape in the thoughts and words and works of Jonathan. He was, I believe, a tanner by trade. He became a popular Dissenting preacher. No Covenantar, no Cameronian, ever pursued Episcopacy with a bitterer hatred and more impassioned denunciations than he. All the anathemas that Luther directed against the Church of Rome, Jonathan inflicted on the Church of England. Its supposed abuses aroused his soul to very frenzy. He was willing to encounter and even to welcome death, as the reward of his courageous protests against what he deemed "the abomination of abomina-

tions." Schemes for exhibiting God's "wrath and vengeance" upon those he denounced were constantly floating in his mind. He made no secret of his antipathies, though he did not divulge his plans of operation, fearing he might be thwarted in his purposes. In carrying out these plans, no hesitation or infirmity of purpose could arrest his hand or divert his mind; and if for a moment some scruples of conscience presented themselves, they were solved by a sort of logical process somewhat too common even among those who, though not mad as Jonathan was mad, yet see the hand of Deity leading them in their very wanderings, and find a warrant for their own aberrations in the reflection that "God moves in a mysterious way," like that in which they presume they are called upon to move. Not a shadow of doubt troubled Jonathan's mind as to his right to denounce, and his mission to punish, ecclesiastical wickedness. If ever there were a reasoning lunatic, it was he.

All that I am about to record I received from the lips of Jonathan Martin. His mode of expression was vehement, his language rude and unpolished—I think it had the Northumbrian twang—he was dogmatical and peremptory, as if he spoke with authority; indeed, if there were anything of which he was truly convinced, it was that he was a special instrument appointed by God to do great works—works too great to be committed to any but the most highly privileged exponents of the Divine will. He once said to me in prison, "Is there any one, from the king on his throne to the lowest of the people, who is not thinking of and speaking of Jonathan Martin; and would this be so, unless Jonathan Martin had to do what can be done by nobody but myself?" No apprehension of consequences, no fear of punishment, ever entered into his mind, except as an encouragement to carry out his designs. "What can they do," he said, "if they do their worst? They can do nothing except to accomplish the purpose of God." One of the earliest and most remarkable observations of Jonathan's intellect was the reasoning unreason (the Spanish call it *sinrazon**) with which he persuaded himself that for the purpose of promoting church reform he was called upon to murder a bishop. He told me that a succession of heavenly visitors had appeared to him at night, and communicated a mandate from God the Father that he should destroy some right reverend prelate. He had no personal resentments to indulge, and therefore his conscience freed him from the charge of malice prepense. He had been offended by the intrusive and imposing character of the cathedral, as it towers over the Lincolnshire flats, and determined that the bishop of that see should be the first example of the Divine judgment. "I was asleep," he said, "when an angel appeared to me—a smiling angel—he had a bow in his hand, a quiver with arrows on his back. He looked kindly and

* England and the English, chapter ix.

* La razon de la sinrazon qui con razon si urge Cervantes.

tenderly towards me, and having said, 'Jonathan! shoot the bishop!' he disappeared. I was a good deal perplexed and embarrassed. I did not like the suggestion. I thought I might be deceived. I did nothing, and I said nothing to anybody, but I still felt that the angel had been instructed to point out my duty to me. That day I went, as usual, to my work. I felt much disquieted. I did not wish to be 'disobedient to the heavenly vision,' but the command did not seem very peremptory. I thought it would be followed by something more decisive, and so it was; for when I fell asleep at night, after much restlessness and many tossings and turnings on my bed, the angel again appeared, but he did not smile—he looked melancholy and disappointed. I fancied he had come to reproach me for my hesitations and doubts. He shook his head mournfully; he held his bow in his left hand, took an arrow from his quiver, and, in a voice that had more in it of sorrow than of anger, said, 'Jonathan! Jonathan! Shoot the bishop!' and then quitted my presence. This second vision added greatly to my distress. I asked myself whether I should consult my wife to help me in my uncertainty, but in a case between God and my conscience I thought it better to keep what had taken place to myself. Though I found my purpose somewhat strengthened by this second manifestation of the Divine will, there was still an unwillingness to do the deed. I took out a pistol which I had in my room, and loaded it; but I resolved upon nothing then. I passed another miserable day. I wanted to do what was right—I was afraid of doing what was wrong; and another night came, without my settling what was to be the result of the struggle between my mortal weakness and the desire to obey what appeared more and more clearly a heavenly command. On the third night, however, the angel's visitation took quite another character. There was no smile of satisfaction, there was no expression of sorrow; but the angel appeared with terrible frowns on his countenance, and looked at me with indignant anger and displeasure. I had never seen anything so dreadful as the glance he hurled at me. It was no longer 'Jonathan!' softly uttered; no longer 'Jonathan! Jonathan!!' with the confiding, inquiring emphasis of the second greeting; but 'Jonathan! Jonathan!! Jonathan!!!' falling on my ears like a voice of thunder. The angel held the bow in his hand—bent the string at full tension, and the arrow was placed as if ready to be launched. 'Jonathan! Shoot the bishop!' was again repeated, and the angel, amidst a crash which seemed to shake my bed and make the whole building totter to its foundations, vanished out of my sight. This seemed so manifest and irresistible an announcement from above, that most of my scruples were removed, and I then confided to my wife that it was my purpose to obey the Lord's commands. I knelt down and prayed earnestly in something like these words: 'O Lord God, I have listened to Thy message and am ready to do

Thy will. Yet I would pray Thee for one more, one final manifestation. When I lay down to rest, I will place the loaded pistol on the table; if I have misunderstood Thy orders, remove the pistol from the table where it shall be placed, and I then shall know that it is Thy will that the bishop should be spared, and he shall be spared; but if on awaking I find the pistol on the table, I shall be sure that I am doing Thy behest, and I undoubtedly will shoot the bishop.'

"But, Jonathan," said I, interrupting him here, "you are familiar with the Scriptures. You know the commandments. Did you not find this: 'Thou shalt do no murder'?"

"Yes! I did, and that commandment somewhat perplexed me. Was it not given by Moses? But don't you know, and does not everybody know, that more is to be learnt from men's works than from their words? And I studied the history of Moses, attending less to what he said than to what he did. And did he not slay the Egyptian? And was not this my warrant for slaying the bishop?"

Jonathan told his wife in confidence what he had now determined to do. She went to a magistrate, who issued a warrant for her husband's arrest. Jonathan was sent to prison, and the bishop escaped his intended doom.

He was placed in a cell with a brick floor, which had been lately scrubbed with pumice-stone, a fragment of which had been scrape down to a sharp edge, and was left in one of the corners. The door was strongly bolted and locked; the windows had iron frames; even the funnel of the chimney was protected by bars of iron. Yet with that small unnoticed piece of pumice-stone Jonathan managed to cut through the bars placed across the chimney, and with the dexterity of a sweep made his way up to the top, whence he descended to the ground to give further effect, but in a form altogether new, to the anathemas he had been pouring out against the Anglican establishment. He knelt down outside the jail, thanked God for his deliverance, confirmed in his conviction that he was a special instrument in the hands of Providence to accomplish some great design. He made his way to York.

He wrote—it was vilely written and strangely misspelt; for Jonathan wrote like a half-instructed schoolboy, and spelt as ill as he wrote—a fierce denunciation against the church and the clergy, declaring that a day of vengeance was at hand, and that a terrible display of the wrath of God would be soon witnessed in that archiepiscopal city, and on that very building. This document he signed with his own hand "Jonathan Martin," and himself pasted against the principal door of the Minister. He entered the cathedral with the crowd of worshippers, took his part in the services, and, when the congregation dispersed, hid himself behind one of the monuments and waited for the closing of the doors. He had with him neither match nor tinder, nor any seeming means of incendiarism. Had he been seized and searched, no evidence of an evil intention

would have been found upon his person. He had nothing about him but a pocket-knife.

The cathedral being cleared of all worshippers, except the incendiary who watched the beadle as he went his rounds, but was not discovered in his place of retreat, Jonathan wandered about, and declared that he found a hard piece of stone, sufficient to strike a light from his penknife, and that the only thing wanted was some tinder which might catch the spark he was about to kindle. In his search he went into the organ-loft, where he discovered some sheets of old rotten music which he thought would answer his purpose; and so they did. Having obtained a spark by a blow given to the stone by the back of the knife, he lighted paper, laid on more of the decayed leaves upon it, blew them into a flame, and gradually deposited upon it and around it all the music and other books he found there. The fire extended to the wooden loft, and when Jonathan had satisfied himself that the work was done, he went into the belfry, seized one of the bell-ropes, and by its aid escaped into the open country, through a window of the cathedral which had been left open. He said he did not look back for some time; but when he did, he saw the flames bursting through the roof of the Minster, and then knelt down and uttered praises to God, in that He had "selected me and helped me to do a work" which would redound so much to His glory, and give such a lesson to the careless and unconverted crowd.

The result is known. The organ-loft was consumed, and serious damage—afterwards repaired at an immense cost—was done to the sacred edifice. As to the identity of the incendiary there could not be a shadow of a doubt; the thing was "not done in a corner." The guilty one had written out his own indictment. He avowed and triumphed in his guilt.

Great was the indignation of the archiepiscopal city, laudably proud as it has ever been of one of the grandest specimens of ecclesiastical architecture. Clergy and laity agreed that no punishment could be too severe for a criminal who had, to the crime of destroying the beautiful structure, added the insult of justifying and boasting of his iniquitous deed. Defence there was none; doubt there was none. Jonathan was thrown into the castle jail, and "Hang him! hang him!" was echoed through every alley, lane, street, square, of York.

I then visited Jonathan in his prison cell. He was not serene, but triumphant. He was certain that all would work together for good—for his own good and for that of his country and of mankind. He was as vain of his exploits as if he had redeemed a race from slavery, or won the most glorious of victories. "I was nobody, and am now more talked about than anybody. Who is there in the land who is not occupied with the name and the deeds of Jonathan Martin? His name was known to nobody; it is now known to everybody. The king is now speaking about me." And he rubbed his hands with delight, and his eyes sparkled with fire, and then he talked of his coming trial. "What is

to happen? I may be acquitted. What then? I shall know that I am preserved for, and appointed to, some greater work. God has yet something for me to do, and it will be done. Or, they may find me guilty. They may be too blind to perceive the truth. I may be condemned to be hanged. What then? Sent to heaven only a little the sooner. That, perhaps, may be God's purpose." So excited, however, was the public mind in York, so determined to punish the miscreant who had fired the temple, that nothing but capital punishment appeared likely to satisfy the call which demanded the utmost rigour of the law. It was believed that there was too much method in Jonathan's doings to allow them to be treated as acts of madness. The population seemed as frenzied as Jonathan himself had ever been; but at this time he was perhaps the man the least impassioned of the whole population.

Some friends, who felt interest in the poor demented man, had him properly defended. I think Henry Brougham was selected, and he successfully urged the plea of lunacy. Jonathan was committed to Bedlam, there to be confined for the term of his natural life. The verdict was a great disappointment to him. It denied to him the glory of martyrdom, and delayed his heavenly reward. He regarded the attempts of those who sought to save him from the hands of the executioner as a feeble and needless effort to obstruct the high purposes of Heaven. He thought the motives of his friends might be good, and did not blame them for having very imperfect and erroneous ideas of duty in interrupting the course of justice. If condemned, he should interpret the condemnation as a proof that his work was done, and that he was called to his heavenly home to receive his well-deserved reward. If he were acquitted, it would be to render yet nobler services before his mortal race was run. These were the two strings in his harp of consolation, whose music seemed divine.

In a moment of confidence Jonathan told me he would paint for me a picture of the vision which had induced him to set fire to the Minster—which he did, and presented it to me. It is drawn in Indian ink, and, though rude, it is a "fine imagining." The base is a dark rolling cloud, pierced through by a fiery sword; on the sword a sort of circular shield is placed, in whose centre is the head of God the Father. The expression is of terrible majesty; the eyes are fierce, the mouth is open, as if issuing a divine command. Beneath it is the inscription:

That's the Sord I am the Hand,
That's the Clud that God command;
This is the Sord I saw in a vision at nounday,
This is the Clud I saw on the Minestra.

Jonathan Martin. York, C.G., Aper the 15, 1829,
his two visions.

The original has lost much of its distinctness. In the wreck of the Alma it lay for some days in the bituminous waters of the Red Sea; but I

have a copy, made at the time, which is a tolerably fair reproduction of the drawing.

I visited Jonathan Martin after he was removed to Bedlam. He remembered what had taken place at York, and said, all that he had ever done, or thought of doing, was as nothing to that which he was now commissioned to do. He talked of blood, of the field of Armageddon, and it was clear his was to be the hand that was "to pour out the cup of the wine of the fierceness of the wrath of God." "Not since men were upon the earth" had anything so dreadful been seen or heard as the deed he was about to accomplish. It was to bring about all the denunciations contained in the sixteenth chapter of Revelations. I asked him what he meant to do. He answered, "You must wait till you see." I reported to the authorities that he was contemplating something terrible, and required to be specially watched.

Shortly afterwards, Jonathan Martin died.

INTERNATIONAL FISHERY-MEETING.

THERE are two things which inevitably follow the railway, wherever it goes—at least in Europe—namely, gas and fish. To the stay-at-home Englishman, the persistent companionship which those luxuries keep up with the iron track is less striking than it is to the continental traveller, especially in the case of the first of the two. Coal, with us, is so widely dispersed and of such comparatively easy transport, that there are few even small country towns in England which are not illuminated by its brilliant flame. On the Continent, when you branch off from the railway by Diligence, you mostly exchange the light of gas for the darkness visible of oil.

The same is true with regard to fish. At least, after the commencement of the coaching period, during which, although fish might be scarce in the Midland Counties and of uncertain quality in summer, still it was a possibility. People knew what cod and skate and soles were, and enjoyed them highly when they got them. The supply now is regular, good, and abundant; but the great change effected in England has been rather a question of price than of fish or no fish. The produce of our seas has been dispersed over a larger area, and prices have been equalised throughout that area. Dwellers along the seaboard suffer most from a scarcity of fish. Some of my readers may remember, like myself, the time when, along certain parts of the coast, four fine fresh mackerel were occasionally to be had for a penny. Those seasons of local plenty are gone, never to return, until the exhaustion of our coal-fields. Still it does seem hard for the inhabitant of a fishing-town, who wants a turbot, to be obliged to order it back from London.

On the Continent, the difficulty of getting sea-fish used to be something like proportional to the square of the distance. If oysters, when they reached our George the First, still resi-

dent in Hanover, were already so "high" that his Majesty, after removing to London, found our best natives insipid and flavourless—they had to be kept several days to please the royal palate—in what state must shell and other fish have been when, and if, it reached the cities of Central Europe?

At the present day, when a train can flit from sea to sea in six-and thirty hours or less, sea-fish stare you in the face in the most unexpected localities. You are surprised with delicious mussels at Tours. At Lyons you are served with mackerel or anything else of its class you like to call for. A few weeks ago, a fishmonger at Berne exhibited in his shop a live sea crawfish. It must have been an early specimen, for such crowds gathered to stare at the monster that he closed his shutters to avoid further inconvenience. The consequence is, that in the second half of our century, inland people ate enormously more fish than they did in the first, while dwellers near the coast still consume a considerable quantity, though at a higher cost than formerly. The rich still get their wants supplied; the poor have to put up with a scanty share. Which is a pity.

The wholesome, nay, restorative results of varying a meat and vegetable diet with fish need here be only hinted at. The wonders worked by cod-liver oil, which are equally attainable by feeding on the cod itself and its liver; the beneficial effects of the phosphates in oysters, rendering them an object of craving with many invalids; the specific action of iodine on scrofulous complaints; and the source whence iodine is obtained—the sea—are instances in point.

Although gas, by following the rail, may perhaps eventually run short, it is not so, and never will be so, with sea-fish. River-fish, in thickly peopled countries, must be carefully guarded, tended, and overseen by fry-herds and fish-keepers; but the fecundity of Ocean knows no limits. We may take and eat all we *can* take, without fear or scruple. We need not abstain, through economical motives. It is not man who will depopulate the seas. A full-grown cod, or an adult seal, has consumed more fish than the most fish-dinner-loving of his eaters or his flayers. The grand alimentary problem now before Western Europe is, how to catch, cure, and distribute more, more, and still more, sea-fish.

We (the nations of North-West Europe) are most happily situated for the purpose. The United Kingdom has the two Channels (the English and St. George's), the German Ocean, and the Atlantic, for her fish-ponds. France has her three seas, the Channel, the Ocean, and the Mediterranean. The North Sea lies open to Norway and Holland; while Prussia, Denmark, and Sweden skirt the Baltic—a sea enjoying the double advantage of being both cool and only moderately salt.

Waters too salt are adverse to the fattening and thriftiness of fish, probably also to their increase—witness the pitting of oysters and mussels, the ascent of rivers by fish to de-

posit their spawn, and a score of other familiar facts. Warm seas produce but poor-fleshed fish. Maury even tells us that the fish of the sea afford perhaps the best indication as to the cold currents in it. The Atlantic cities and towns of America owe their excellent fish-markets to the stream of cold water from the north, which runs along the coast. The temperature of the Mediterranean is four or five degrees above the ocean temperature of the same latitude; and the fish there are mostly indifferent. On the other hand, the temperature along the American coast is several degrees below that of the ocean, and from Maine to Florida tables are supplied with the most excellent of fish. The sheep's-head of this cold current, so much esteemed in Virginia and the Carolinas, loses it flavour and is considered worthless when taken on the warm coral-banks of the Bahamas. The same is the case with other fish. In the cold water of that coast, they are delicious; in the warm water on the other edge of the Gulf Stream, their flesh is soft and unfit for table.

A cold-watered country, rich in first-rate fish, has recently set the example of comparing what rhymesters call "the funny prey." Bergen, in Norway, opened, in 1865, an International Fisheries Exhibition, original in design and spirited in execution; this year, Boulogne-sur-Mer has given the idea still fuller development, and illustrating amply not merely the catching of, but everything that has reference to, salt-water or fresh-water fish.

The Boulogne Exposition Internationale de Pêche is extremely attractive to the eye. It is interesting to the mind also, exciting curiosity and inviting inquiry. Many of the objects exhibited are as new to the educated as to the illiterate public; and it is both socially and commercially important. It is, moreover, eminently international.

For the holding of such an Exhibition, Boulogne is particularly fortunate in her central position amidst the grand community of fishermen. This year, she is also favoured by circumstances. Having recently erected a new covered fish-market, containing two noble halls and their appendages, she handsels them with this admirable display before yielding them up to the dealers in fish. Such an opening will doubtless bring good luck with it. But the crowning element of success is to be found in the intelligent spirit and the perfect courtesy displayed by the gentlemen connected with the undertaking; among whom I am bound to signalise the name of Monsieur Edmond Magnier, the Adjoint Secretary.

On the quay, near the bridge leading to the railway station, is a bronze statue of Edward Jenner, the discoverer of vaccination, who for a while resided in Boulogne. Facing this statue, the new Halle aux Poissons occupies an irregular plot of ground. You enter by the passage through which fish will be carted into the wholesale market; and here, at the outset, M. Boucher de Perthes meets you with a retrospective collection of the flint

arms and weapons found in the gravel-pits of Abbeville and Amiens. There is also a bit of an ancient net; there are stone weights for nets, and models of fishhooks made of thorns, employed from the remotest antiquity. Primeval fishermen seem to have had no metal whatever. Afterwards, while metals were still rare, our ancestors of the age of bronze and the beginning of the age of iron employed polished stone and the bones of animals for every available purpose. And now, although the Greenlanders *have* iron, they use it with the utmost economy. In the interesting series sent by the Copenhagen Ethnographical Society, most of the objects are ornamented with bone. There is a barbed harpoon made of bone, a barbed trident entirely of the same material, and a lance of bone and iron combined. The Swedes, who fish the lakes Aniueen and Ouenern, ballast their nets with bones.

The contents of the Exhibition are, first, the fishes themselves, preserved in spirits. Most of these are contributed by the Museum of Bergen. From England, Mr. Buckland has sent a series of eight specimens showing the development of salmon, from the egg to a year old, when ready to go to sea as a smolt. He also shows a new ornamental fresh-water fish, the "gold schley," from Germany (of the colour of the gold fish, with a few dark spots, and resembling the red mullet in shape), recently introduced to England by the Acclimatization Society. Among the series are young herring, in various stages, from four to twenty-eight weeks old, proving, by comparison, what our Yarell taught us, that whitebait are *not* baby-herring, but a distinct species. The cod series, too, is curious. It consists of cod-roe, nearly arrived at maturity; roe artificially fecundated, three or four hours, eleven or twelve hours, two or three days, a week, sixteen days, after spawning. These are illustrated by magnified drawings. In the last, the young fish are fully developed and ready to burst the shell. And then come the minutest of codlings, caught on the surface of the sea, in the finest of nets, in different stages of development, until they may be considered capable of going alone and taking care of themselves, for which they are blessed with a capital appetite. On buying a whole cod, it is always worth while to see what curiosities its stomach contains. On one such occasion, I found a black puppy dog; the fishmonger, who presided over the operation, had taken the knife which performed it out of the stomach of another codfish.

To estimate the value of this raw material, we have only to remember that fish are the grand restorers of human wastefulness in respect to what we allow to flow into the sea. With them are brought back to land valuable elements which man allows the land to become exhausted of. And so here we have the taper eel, the glittering sprat, the dingy coal-fish, the spotted plaice, herring of divers local varieties, showing the kinds peculiar to certain fishing-grounds. There is the speckled trout of different ages, three, four, and five years old;

there are cockles, clams or sand-mussels (*Mya arenaria*); crabs, lobsters, and prawns, au naturel, in their unboiled state; there are fish, male and female, showing that, as a general rule, the gentleman is long and slender, while the lady is short and stout. There is an infant dolphin, seeing that a full-grown fellow would be rather inconvenient to bottle, and there are adult mackerel of royal aspect. A noble salmon, from the Baltic, makes one wonder how *he* would taste—as the New Zealander said of the missionary—if taken out of his alcoholic pickle.

Fish are peculiarly unfortunate in offering a double motive for their destruction. They are caught on account of their own culinary merits, and they are caught to lure other fish to their death. Every marine creature, and every part of it, serves as bait; exemplified especially by cuttle-fish, mussels (scraped from the bottom of the sea by an iron drag with a bag behind it), sand-eels, which burrow like a mole before you have time to lay a finger on them, and that strong-stomached worm, the *Arenicola piscatorum*, which thrives and fattens by swallowing an unlimited allowance of sand.

Sponges are self-manufactured products of the sea, the main difficulty being to get them. The same may be said of oysters; because whoever is unable to open an oyster is deficient in one of the arts of civilised life. For those who cannot—and such persons do exist—there are oyster-opening machines of irresistible action. Give me, however, the human hand, which neither spills the juice nor tears the flesh. The natural history of oysters, or rather of oyster-shells, is illustrated by Mr. Frank Buckland in a curious series from England, Ireland, Scotland, France, America. We have young oysters, or spat, from one to three weeks old; from nine to fourteen months; from one to one year and a half old, when it is called brood; from two to three years, also brood. At from three to six years old they attain the rank of natives, being fully developed and fit for market. Sheppy Island sends its hem or ham oysters, and the Ile de Ré its specimens of oyster-breeding. Oysters are seen adhering to various substances, living and dead: as pottery, porcelain, glass, welks, and other shell-fish. Sections of oyster-shell show its laminated structure; pearl oysters from Ceylon and Panama display the lustre of its internal surface.

Seaweeds, too, may claim a place among the results of fishing. There is not a single poisonous seaweed, while many are nutritious and restorative. They render us enormous indirect service by affording pasture to legions of living creatures which supply food to fish, who are food for men. They gave soda, until we learned how to make it from salt. Of marine algae, there are excessively beautiful collections, some adhering to paper, "nature-printed," looking more like exquisite paintings of seaweeds than the realities themselves. This impression is heightened by the (perhaps too) formal regularity of their arrangement. Others are dried and goupéd, and so framed under convex glasses, forming charming bouquets to keep and admire as souvenirs of the Channel coast.

Among the elements of fishing may be fairly included books and journals descriptive of fish and their ways. The *Fishes of Scandinavia* appear in coloured plates. Widegren sends his *Researches on the Salmonidæ of Sweden*. Mr. Buckland's *Fish-Culture* attracts the inquiring eye, as also does his weekly natural-history paper, *Land and Water*.

Another category consists of marine products which have undergone preparation of some kind or other, overwhelming us with the abundance of its riches. Cod-liver oil alone makes a brilliant display; and in saying cod-liver, we must also include the livers of ling, dog-fish, and others. It is of every shade intermediate between Guinness's stout and the palest amber. The brown quality passes through light brown and yellow, until it reaches what is called the white quality, liquefied by steam. This article is contributed by Norway with special liberality. Pyramids and temples of cod-liver oil exhibit its various shades and hues, in flat bottles to show its clearness, in round bottles to display the depth of its colour.

But we have not yet done with cod. The northern nations especially manifest both its abundance and the store they set by it. In preparing it, they observe the utmost economy. Nothing is allowed to be wasted. For salting, the fish is decapitated. In the midst of such plenty, improvident people would throw the heads away; not so the North Sea fishermen. In the first place, the tongues—not so well known in England as they deserve to be, our experience being mainly limited to the sound, or swimming-bladder, which is taken from the *body* of the fish—the tongues and their roots are cut out and salted separately. And for these processes different qualities of salt are employed. The cheek-pieces—the white lump of muscle on each side of the head—are carefully taken out, salted, and dried separately; also the two delicate bits of meat at the back or nape of the fish's neck. The fins are dried, to furnish glue. B. Lundgreen, of Dronheim, sends salted cods' roes, of 1866, première qualité; Hans Clausen, of Christiansund, sends sounds and stomachs.

From her dried cod Norway also makes fisk meel (fish meal, farine de poisson). While writing this, I am nibbling a biscuit made of fish flour. Bordevich and Co., of Lofoten, in Norway, sell extra fûnt fisk meel at less than twopence the pound avoirdupois. The bones and skin and all other useless portions, taken out before the grinding, are likewise carefully utilised, dried, and minced fine into fish guano, of whose fertilising effects learned professors give most flattering certificates. Agriculturists inclined to make the experiment may order it of Det norske Fiskeguanoselskabs Direction i Christiania (la Direction de la Société du guano de poisson de Norvège à Christiania).

Other good things, prepared and dried for transport and future use, are mussel-powder (*muslingnudler*) and lobster-powder (*hummernudler*), the latter especially serviceable for sauce, on emergencies. How often has the frantic cook exclaimed, "Here's the turbot, but where's

the lobster for sauce?" Norway helps you to a lobster handier than the fatted fowl in a hen-coop. It is of little use, however, to discover the existence of unknown alimentary materials, unless the knowledge is also acquired how to make them presentable and palatable. Therefore, steep cods' tongues thirty-six hours, changing the water once; boil ten minutes, throwing them into *boiling* water; serve covered with egg-sauce and garnished with toast. Or, boil and let cool, and then fry to a nice brown with egg and bread-crumbs. Or, with them instead of sounds, execute Dr. Kitchener's recipe for cod-sound pie. Or, use them instead of calf's head to make mock-turtle, helping out the thickening with fish-flour, and adding the indispensable seasonings and glass of Madeira.

The Lofoten fish-flour does not need unsalting, but only a steeping in milk for a couple of hours. In a dry place, it will keep a year. In fish soups it is excellent—I speak from experience—as well as in others, hare soup for instance, which many cooks heighten with a dash of anchovy. The Christiania Society's recipe for a pudding for eight or ten persons is: a pint and a half of fish-flour, half a pint of potato arrowroot, half a pint of pounded biscuit, six or seven eggs, half a pint of sweet cream, and two ounces of butter. The fish-flour should be put into cold water in the afternoon of the day before, and then carefully strained away. The eggs and the cream to be well beaten separately. But this cook's oracle, with consistent ambiguity, omits to say whether the pudding should be boiled or baked. Try baking first.

Of stock fish and their fellows, there is no end. Dried ling, of eel-like proportions, might serve for edible walking-sticks. Other ling, white and semi-transparent, are spread out, like butter-flies. Dried skate retain as posthumous ornaments their long tail and their double jaws. Lapland dries even fresh-water fish: as pike. Sweden's salt haddock, Scotland's salt herring, Holland's dried flat-fish, and Norlandske flynder (dried Northland flounders), emit each their peculiar perfume. France shows magnificent salted mackerel: a preparation worth attention: and little known in England. They are also smoked, imitating kipper salmon.

More complicated and highly-finished articles are the Boulogne small herring preserved in oil; potted sprats, smelling savoury, and calling to mind a story in Mrs. Opie's White Lies; the Prima Delikatess-Anjoris, from A. M. Rybergs, of Stockholm; pickled mussels of golden hue; and essence of crab. Besides fresh salmon and rodfish (*Sebastus norvegicus*), Mr. Thame, of Drontheim (pronounce Thronthjem), sends snow-hen, or ptarmigan, roast or boiled, at the moderate price of two francs each per box, besides Norsk kaviar. And then there are from Heimerdinger's, of Hamburg, fresh-water crawfish tails, sturgeon's flesh, smoked salmon in oil, pickled eel, potted lamprey, and a host of other dainties *not* for the million.

But before we can enjoy these delicate delights—and the sturgeon-roe caviare alone would suffice to inspire a gastronomic lyric—we must

catch our fish. For which purpose, we are treated to nets and engines of such ingenuity, power, sweep, and destructiveness, that the wonder is, that, with all these appliances, *any* fish, scaly or shelly, escape and survive to continue their species. There are rakes, like extra-strong garden-rakes, with receptacles appended, to hold whatever their teeth displace. There are wire and wicker drums, or traps, for the inveigling of lobsters, crabs, and eels. There are purse-nets big enough to catch a Patagonian family; bag-nets, trawl-nets, casting-nets, seine-nets; single, double, and multiple nets, nets of cotton, hemp, and flax, besides enormous labyrinthine nets vast enough to entrap a wandering shark.

These nets are variously floated and weighted, according to the opportunities enjoyed by their owners; floated with pine-wood, cork, inflated skins, and blown-glass buoys; ballasted with weights of burnt clay, of stone wrapped in birch-bark, and of metal, the local material predominating. Thus, Norway has wooden rings to her sails. To fabricate the nets we have fibres, threads, twines, cords, yards, ropes, of all colours, sizes, and consistencies, tanned and untanned, tight and lax, fine-spun, loose-twisted. The effigy of a woman spins them at a wheel like that used by our grandmothers; and Jouannin and Co.'s netting-machine (sold to an English purchaser) nets ever so many bobbins at once, making its meshes with the very same knot as that executed by human fingers.

Fish are also caught by lines, horizontal, perpendicular, and at every angle between the two. There are even automaton fishing-lines, acting by clockwork. The hooks to garnish these vary in size from hooks that might hold a half-grown minnow to such as would land a hippopotamus; besides mechanical hooks, shining flat hooks baited with red cloth, silver-fish hooks, hooks with chains, spinning-hooks, hooks crosswise, star-grouped hooks, centipede hooks, hooks like Prince of Wales's feathers, and hooks arranged on hooks by thousands. Add to these, eel-spears, harpoons, light-holders for flambeau fishing, blubber-knives, razors for shaving whales to the quick—and there is enough to make the fish of the sea quake and tremble in their scales.

To catch fish, people go in boats; so we have numerous and beautiful models of boats, slipper-shaped, shuttle-shaped, scuttle-shaped, sharp at both ends, blunt at one end, blunt at both ends; long-boats, jolly-boats, luggers, yawls, row-boats, sailing-boats, life-boats, boats for Lapland lakes, skin boats for Greenland seas, wicker boats or coracles for Welsh trout-streams.

When the fish are caught, they have to be cured, preserved, packed, and disposed of; so there are barrels holding from a quart to many multiples of quarts; boats and boxes for keeping fish alive; machines for salting herring; fireplaces and cooking-stoves for boats; fish-caldrons big enough to boil Falstaff in, or make a stew of Daniel Lambert. Artistic models show us how fish are cured in quantity, and how they are preserved in ice. The

"isnus" indeed appears to render as important service to the Norwegian fisheries as it does to the Scotch.

All this is only a sample of the treasures contained in the Boulogne Exhibition, which is a great success. Its object has been to enable fishermen to compare foreign methods and customs with their own, and to derive instruction from the comparison. Printed accounts, reports, journals, reach maritime people slowly, and make but a slight impression when they do attract their notice. Minds uninfluenced by the clearest descriptions, will be convinced by the sight of things themselves and their practical results. In this light the Boulogne collection supplies a complete course of public teaching, addressing itself to every class—to scientific experimenters—pisciculturists and oyster-growers—as well as to unlettered sailors, and fishermen bound by the trammels of routine. Its importance is still further increased by its concerning the interests of merchants, shipowners, and capitalists in general, not to mention the nursing of future navies and the feeding of future generations.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

THE ASSASSINATION OF MR. PERCIVAL.

THE session of the year in which Wellington took Badajoz and Ciudad Rodrigo, and in which Napoleon retreated from Moscow, was an eventful one from its very commencement.

In the afternoon of May 19, 1812, the lobby of the House of Commons was full of noisy politicians, discussing the recent grant of one hundred thousand pounds a year to the new Regent, the probabilities of a war with America, the extravagance of the new Park to which the Prince had given his name, the outrages of the Luddites, the prospects of Lord Castlereagh succeeding the Marquis Wellesley as Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the more than likelihood of Wellington again retiring to the Portuguese frontier. Old politicians were lamenting the deaths of Pitt and Fox (1805-6); grievance-mongers were button-holding impatient M.P.s; place-hunting constituents were seeking their victims with the pertinacity of harriers that have lost their hare; men with claims, real or imaginary, on government (one among them especially brooding, soured, and malignant), were watching the opening doors. Through the crowd, unnoticed but by habitués of the House, passed Mr. Dundas, Viscount Palmerston, the Earl of Liverpool, Lord Mulgrave, and other members of the cabinet; but the prepossessing, courteous Premier had either not appeared or was hidden by the crowd round the door. That shrewd, hard-working, adroit man would soon be there, if he had not already come, and his followers and partisans were waiting, eager for his coming, and ardent for the debate, in which the Premier would calmly oppose the Catholic claims, or resist any more extended prosecution of the Peninsular war.

A slight murmur, at about a quarter past

five, at last announced the long-expected minister. At that very moment the sharp ringing report of a pistol at the entrance of the lobby startled every one, both in the hall and in the adjacent committee-rooms. There arose a cry of

"Murder—murder!"

"Shut the doors, prevent any one escaping."

Then a person, with his hand pressing his left breast, rushed from the cluster of members standing round the entrance, staggered towards the door of the House, groaned faintly, and fell forwards on his face. Mr. Smith, member for Norwich, was the first to approach him. Thinking it some one in a fit, he walked round the fallen man, not at first recognising his person, or knowing that he was wounded; but finding he did not stir, he instantly stooped to assist him, and on raising his head was horrified to discover that it was the Premier. Requesting the assistance of a bystander, the two men instantly raised Mr. Percival, carried him between them into the room of the Speaker's secretary, and set him on a table resting in their arms. He was already not only speechless, but senseless, and blood was oozing fast from his mouth.

They felt his heart. In a few minutes the pulsation grew fainter. In ten minutes he was dead.

Mr. Lynn, a surgeon of Great George-street, instantly came and examined the body. He found a pistol-bullet had struck the Premier on the left side, just over the fourth rib. It had penetrated three inches, and passed obliquely towards the heart, causing almost instant death.

The moment Mr. Percival fell, several voices had called out:

"That is the fellow."

"That is the man who fired the pistol."

The assassin was sitting, in a state of great agitation, on a bench by the fireplace, with one or two persons to the right of him. General Gascoyne, M.P. for Liverpool, with a soldier's promptitude, instantly sprang on him and clutching him by the breast of his coat and his neck, took the still smoking pistol from him, and told him that it was impossible that he could escape.

The murderer replied:

"I am the person who shot Mr. Percival, and I surrender myself."

Mr. J. Hume, member for Weymouth, also seized him, and took from his pocket a second pistol, ready primed and loaded with ball. Mr. Burgess, a solicitor of Mayfair, also helped to arrest the man, and to take him into the body of the house and give him into the custody of the messengers. The murderer's agitation had by this time entirely subsided. He seemed quite sane, grew perfectly calm, and commented on some slight inaccuracy in Mr. Burgess's statement.

General Gascoyne instantly recognised the assassin as John Bellingham, a man who had been a merchant in Liverpool. Three weeks before he had called on the general and requested his assistance in pressing his claims on parliament for redress for an unjust imprisonment

at St. Petersburg, the resident ambassador having been applied to in vain. The general had recommended him to memorialise the Premier.

A great fear fell on the cabinet ministers that night when the news of the desperate and at first unaccountable assassination reached them. The Prince Regent, amid the vulgar and meretricious splendour of his pseudo-Oriental palace at Brighton, shook like a jelly. A massacre of ministers was apprehended; there were the wildest rumours current of Luddite outrages and revolutionary conspiracies. Mr. Percival had, no doubt, been the first victim. Whose turn was to be next? Where could the sword be best aimed to reach the necks of the assassins? All was fear, gloom, and doubt? The people of England were known to be discontented; it might be necessary to use grape-shot and sabres to keep down their foolish and dangerous impatience for reform; besides, what was the correction of any abuse but an incipient revolution? "Scrape one barnacle from the vessel of state, as well stave and sink her at once in the Red Sea of Jacobinism," screamed the political Chinese.

Many of those grave and eminent men who came with hushed step into the Speaker's drawing-room, where the Premier lay dead, must, as they looked at the pale calm face, and, as the events of the life of the murdered man passed swiftly through their minds, have remembered the peroration of his speech as Attorney-General at the trial of Peltier, the French editor, in London for his libel against Napoleon: it seemed now almost like a presentiment of his own fate.

Replying to Mackintosh, Mr. Percival had then said (1802): "There is something so base and disgraceful—there is something so contrary to everything that belongs to the character of an Englishman—there is something so immoral in the idea of assassination, that the exhortation to assassinate this or any other chief magistrate would be a crime against the honourable feelings of the English law."

The biography of Mr. Percival is brief. He was the second son of the Earl of Egmont, and was born in 1762. Educated at Harrow and Cambridge, he went to the Bar in 1786, in spite of great shyness, soon became leader of the Midland Circuit, and in 1796 won his silk gown, became member for Northampton, and a protégé of Pitt. When that minister fought Mr. Tierney, he kindly declared Mr. Percival competent to be his successor, and even to cope with Fox.

Percival supported Pitt in all his measures, especially in the mischievous and unnecessary war with France. Under Addington, the busy satellite became Attorney-General. He was legal adviser of the unhappy Princess of Wales, and, under the Duke of Portland, was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, demanding 2000*l.* a year, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, for surrendering his business at the bar. Parliament growing indignant, he reluctantly relinquished the appointment, and his friends trumpeted forth his patriotic disinterestedness.

On the death of the Duke of Portland, in 1807, he became Premier.

Palpably a third-rate professional politician—scarcely fit to carry Lord Chatham's crutch, Percival was glorified by the suddenness of his melancholy death: his smooth ready talk was called eloquence; his quickness at figures, genius for finance; his obstinate and narrow-minded persecution of his Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, intrepidity and energy. Modern historians of his own party still idolise his memory as "a champion of the Protestant faith." It must be allowed that he was a good man; sincere, honest, and of unimpeachable integrity. Like Pitt, he died poor, though hundreds of millions had passed through his hands.

On the 15th of May, Bellingham was tried at the Old Bailey, before Sir James Mansfield, Baron Graham, and Mr. Justice Grose. Most of the aldermen were present, besides many noblemen and members of parliament. Mr. Alley (prisoner's counsel) objected to the prisoner being called upon to plead, and applied for postponement of trial, on ground that he had affidavits to prove prisoner insane. The court deciding that this application should not be granted, the prisoner pleaded Not guilty.

The witnesses for prosecution having been examined, Bellingham proposed to leave his defence to his counsel, but was informed that prisoners' counsel were not allowed to address the court in defence. He then addressed the jury in a speech of above an hour's length, interspersed with the reading of several documents. He had, he said, no personal malice against Mr. Percival. "The unfortunate lot had fallen upon him" as the leading member of the administration, which had repeatedly refused any address for the injuries he (the prisoner) had sustained in Russia. He had been engaged in business at Liverpool; in 1804 he went to Russia. His business being finished, he was about to leave Archangel for England, when a ship called the *Soleure*, insured at Lloyd's, was lost in the White Sea. Lloyd's refusing to pay the insurance, Bellingham was suspected of having something to do with their refusal (though he had not), and, in consequence, he was seized in his carriage while passing the Russian frontier by order of the governor at Archangel, and imprisoned. He applied to the British ambassador, Lord Leveson Gower, who, having learnt from the military governor at Archangel that he was detained for a legal cause, and had conducted himself in a most indecorous manner, refused to interfere. His young wife, with an infant in arms, was obliged to make the journey to England alone. He himself, after suffering unheard-of hardships, kept in a miserable condition, and banded from prison to prison, in 1809 received at midnight his discharge from prison, and an order to quit the Russian dominions, with a pass; which was, in fact, an acknowledgment of the justice of his cause. Since his return to England, he had applied to the most influential men in the government, had been sent from

one to another; last of all to Mr. Percival, who obstinately refused to sanction his claims in parliament. If he had met Lord Gower after his resolution was taken, he (Lord G.) should have received the ball, and not Mr. Percival. He concluded his defence by justifying the murder, on account of the injuries he had received from the government. He disclaimed the plea of insanity.

The case was desperate, for the prisoner had stoutly denied his own insanity, and pleaded justification for his crime. Mr. Alley had only the one excuse to press forward—insanity. That is, not that the prisoner did not mean to shoot Mr. Percival, but that he did so with a disordered mind.

The swearing was very hard. A lady from Southampton, who had known Bellingham from a child, declared that she believed him deranged, so far as related to his sufferings in Russia. She had never known him to be under restraint, but his father had died mad. A servant at a house in New Milman-street, where Bellingham had lodged for four months, had thought the prisoner deranged for some time past, particularly just before the murder.

The trial lasted eight hours. Lord Mansfield having summed up, the jury retired for ten minutes, and then returned a verdict of guilty. The Recorder passed sentence of death, directing that the prisoner's body should, after execution, be dissected and anatomised.

During the early part of the trial, which lasted eight hours, Bellingham trifled with the flowers placed on the front of the dock. He read his defence in a fervid but calm manner, but occasionally shed tears. At the conclusion he requested a glass of water, as any speaker on indifferent subjects might have done. He listened to his sentence, however, with the most intense awe, and was led out of court overcome with grief.

Bellingham's antecedents were not very creditable, if the contemporaneous reports can be implicitly trusted. He seems to have been a turbulent, untoward, rather unprincipled adventurer, of a subtle, dangerous, rankling disposition, inflamed almost to madness by a long series of misfortunes. He was a native of St. Neot's, in Huntingdonshire, and was born in 1771. When he was only a year old, his father, a land-surveyor, betraying symptoms of mental derangement, was sent to St. Luke's, but at the end of a year was discharged as incurable, and died soon after. At the age of fourteen, John Bellingham was apprenticed to a jeweller; but ran away from his master. His mother then appealing to a Mr. Daw, her brother-in-law, to do something for her son, Daw fitted Bellingham out as a subaltern in an East India regiment. This was a social advance, and the lad's fortune seemed now secured; but ill fortune followed him. The Hartwell, the transport in which he sailed, was wrecked, and he returned to England, abandoning his profession, for some unrecorded reason. Mr. Daw again came forward, and probably seeing a predisposition to commerce in the ex-soldier, advanced him money to purchase the business of a tinplate worker. But the un-

lucky man's house took fire soon afterwards, not without some suspicion (as usual in advantageous fires) falling upon the proprietor, and in 1794, Bellingham, the young tradesman, became bankrupt.

Bellingham then commenced business at Liverpool without any capital, as an insurance broker, and married an Irish girl named Neville, by whom he had one child. They lived very unhappily, and she eventually supported herself as a milliner.

He then entered a merchant's office at Liverpool, his commercial expertness gaining him the confidence of some of the leading houses engaged in the Russian trade. He was sent out to Archangel as their commission agent, living at that great emporium of the Siberian trade in the White Sea to purchase furs, tea, hardware, tallow, flax, pitch, and timber for the English market. Here Bellingham was still very unfortunate or very dishonest, or perhaps both.

He drew bills on his principals to the amount of ten thousand pounds, squandered the money, and made no shipments of the tea, tallow, or furs so purchased. Returning to England, and failing to fulfil a contract entered into with some merchants of Hull, Bellingham was thrown into prison. He then a second time visited Archangel, but was again unlucky, and was about to return to England, finding the country getting too hot for him, some disagreeable thing having occurred about the insurance of a vessel, when he was arrested for private debts. He accused the Russian authorities loudly of corruption and injustice, claiming the protection of the English ambassador, Lord Leveson Gower, and also of Sir L. Sharp; but they, finding his arrest to be legal, and the matter not within their province, declined to interfere, and left him to the Russian tribunals.

Only those who know the profound corruption of Russian officials can imagine the misery of a provincial Russian prison. Filth, starvation, cruelty, and a hopeless delay of justice, are the smallest of the evils a prisoner so friendless would have had to encounter.

Five years of such slavery in such a climate, far from wife and children, in the middle of a life that had yet to be retrieved, was enough to have maddened better men than the future assassin of Percival.

Released at last, without trial and without redress, the very abruptness of the release going far to prove his innocence, to what happiness and welcome did this unhappy man return? To beg, to sue, to supplicate to the insolent door-porters of the Marquis of Wellesley, the Earl of Uxbridge, Lord L. Gower, Mr. A. Paget, Sir F. Burdett, and Mr. Percival. Day by day he must have found the faces of the men he importuned grow harder and colder. Day by day hope must have lessened, and hatred struck a deeper root. Day by day his heart must have sunk within him as he passed up the old street to receive the same rebuffs.

Learned gentlemen interested in the High Court of Procrastination, members of the Prolongation Board, and all branches of the How-not-to-do-it Office, let us beg you to take warning by the fate of Mr. Percival, and remember that while some great inventors die calmly of hope deferred, there may be rasher and more violent natures who from time to time may resort to more desperate measures, and wreak on some of you the wrongs entailed by an obstructive system. Justice delayed becomes injustice. Every inventor who dies of official neglect retards by his death the progress of our national civilisation.

Bellingham suffered on the 18th of May.

When he entered the yard he walked firmly, and looking up calmly, observed, "Ah, it rains heavily!" He firmly and uniformly refused to express any contrition for his crime, or for Mr. Percival's fate; but he lamented the pain he had given Mrs. Percival and her children; he as steadily denied having any accomplice, when questioned on these points by the sheriffs. In answer to the clergyman, Bellingham said:

"I thank God for having enabled me to meet my fate with so much fortitude and resignation."

He remarked to the hangman:

"Do everything properly, that I may not suffer more than is necessary."

To another he said:

"Draw the cord tighter, I don't wish to have the power of offering resistance."

He ascended the scaffold with a cheerful countenance and a calm air, looked about him rapidly, but with no air of triumph or display. He at first objected to the cap being put over his face, but afterwards acquiesced. As the clock struck eight, and while the prisoner and the clergyman were still praying, the supporters of the internal square of the scaffold were struck away, and Bellingham dropped.

The revenge had been achieved, the penalty for the crime had been paid; and now, leaving the assassin unpitied and unwept on the dismal table of the hospital dissecting-room, let us pass to the honoured grave of the honest statesman. Perhaps the House of Commons, acting for the nation, received with enthusiasm the Prince's message recommending a parliamentary provision for the widow and children of the late Premier. On the 12th, Lord Castlereagh moved a resolution, which was carried by a large majority, that an annuity of two thousand pounds should be granted to Mrs. Percival, and a sum of fifty thousand pounds should be vested in trustees for the benefit of her twelve children. On the 14th, three hundred members of parliament, dressed in mourning, carried up the address in answer to the Regent's message.

During the proceedings relative to the generous grant, the influential members (Canning, &c.), in their laudable desire to express their sorrow for the murdered Premier, claimed for him the highest honours due to political genius. It was not then the time to show that Spencer

Percival, though a useful and amiable man, was indisputably nothing more than a third-rate statesman.

KÄTCHEN'S CAPRICES.

IN TEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER III.

KÄTCHEN, on reaching home, ran into her own room, and, having fastened the door, relieved her mortified feelings by giving loose to a copious flow of tears. They were childlike tears; an April shower which fell easily, and gave place to sunshine, without leaving any stormy ground-swell behind them, as a fit of weeping will do in more passionate natures. She had made many high resolves that she would not, by any persuasion, give her company to the smokers in the kitchen. She would stay up there by herself, and be miserable without quite knowing why. But as the afternoon wore on, she repented of her resolution, and at last, about supper-time—that is to say, between four and five o'clock—she put her head outside the door to listen to what was going on. She heard her father's rich bass voice rolling out short disjointed sentences between pauses that, she knew, were delightfully occupied by smoking; and then she heard a ringing laugh that made her heart beat a little quicker, and, after a farewell glance at the green mirror, she stole down-stairs quietly, and went into the kitchen with an assumption of perfect indifference to the presence of any one there. Besides her father and Fritz, there was another man seated at the table, smoking a long pipe, which Kätchen at once perceived to be a real meerschaum. The stranger was a singularly ugly man, with flat blunt features and a short bull neck; but he looked good humoured withal, and intelligent. He was dressed in a frock-coat and trousers, instead of the peasant costume worn by the usual frequenters of the Golden Lamb. There was no one else there, for the one stout serving-maid who, with Kätchen, performed all the in-door work of the house, had leave on Sunday evenings to visit her friends. So Josef Kester and his two guests had the spacious kitchen all to themselves. A little table was drawn up close to one of the open windows, whence a sweet scent from the woodbine came in with the pure air, but was speedily choked and stifled by the heavy clouds of tobacco-smoke that almost hid the smokers from view. Each man had before him a great glass tankard of foaming amber beer. No one noticed Kätchen at first, and she went and sat down at another window furthest removed from that where the men were, and, pushing back the lattice, leant her elbows on the sill and looked out at the lake. Presently she felt that some one was standing very close to her, but she would not turn round; and then Fritz's voice said in her ear, "My Kätchen, won't you speak to me?"

"Your Kätchen, indeed! Not quite. And besides——" Here Kätchen gave a pretty toss of her head in the direction of the stranger.

"Oh, you needn't mind him," said simple

Fritz, delighted to think that he had discovered the reason of his sweetheart's show of coolness. "He's a very good fellow; Johann Laurier, a Swiss courier. He has come from Ischl with the foreign lady and gentleman. And he knows—that is, I told him—that you and I——"

"What did you tell him, Herr Rosenheim? How dare you talk about me to a stranger without my permission?"

It seemed fated that whatever Fritz said or did to-day should affront Kätchen.

This state of things was not entirely unprecedented; but Fritz always fell into the error of trying to reason about what was quite unreasonable, and, being neither so quick-witted nor so nimble of tongue as his pretty antagonist, he got the worst of the argument, even though he were thoroughly in the right.

"I suppose you're too proud to acknowledge me for a lover, now that you've dined with Herr Ebner, and been rowed in his boat. I heard of it. The folks at the Black Eagle say all sorts of things."

"The folks at the Black Eagle! And what do I care for them, or for you either, if you are so ignorant as to listen to the gossip of such as them. As to being proud, I can tell you I think father is quite as good as Herr Ebner, even though he may not be as rich. But he was as rich once, and richer too."

"Well, Kätchen, I'm sorry if I've made you cross——"

"Cross!"

"Well, if I've offended you, then. But it seemed as if you would hardly speak to me to-day when I first saw you, and now you are as cold and stand-offish as you can be; why or wherefore, I'm sure I don't know. I love you with all my heart, Kätchen, and I never shall love another girl the same as I do you."

And Fritz ventured to take up the plump sunburnt little hand that lay on Kätchen's lap. He held it lightly in his broad brown palm for a moment, and then the wilful girl jerked it away with a pettish exclamation, and walked off towards her father. "You tease me," said she, over her shoulder. It was somewhat trying to her lover, that, while Kätchen was extremely exacting in her demands on his devotion, she resented any show of tenderness on his part; and sometimes, when he was most earnest in his expressions of love, she would turn all he said into ridicule, and make the house ring with laughter at his protestations. To-night, however, she was not in a laughing mood, but went and sat beside her father, resting her hand on his shoulder, and apparently absorbed in thought. She was conscious, though, of Fritz's rueful puzzled look as he resumed his seat, and absently took long pulls at a perfectly cold pipe; and she was conscious, also, of the admiring gaze that Monsieur Jean Laurier cast upon her flushed face. "Your daughter, Mr. Landlord?" said he, with a polite bow.

"Yes, Herr Laurier, my little Katerina—Kätchen, as she's always called. Child, this gentleman is a great traveller, and can tell you

of wonderful places he has seen, and wonderful people too. He speaks all languages——"

"Not quite all, Herr Landlord," modestly put in Laurier.

"Yes, yes, *all*, I say—all that are worth speaking. You should have come down before, you puss, and you would have heard such things about Rome, and Paris, and Vienna. I've been relating part of my history to the Herr, and he thinks it very hard that a man like myself should have been so ill treated by fortune. But, lord! I could explain it if I liked. A good deal of it is the fault of others. However, no more on that score. It can't interest a stranger."

Nevertheless, no stranger was ever half an hour beneath the roof of the Golden Lamb without hearing Josef Kester's version of his own misfortunes.

"What fine hair the Fräulein has!" said Laurier, turning the discourse.

"Our Kätchen? Yes, friend, you may say so; and a pretty colour, too; not like the coarse black horsehair one sees hereabouts. Her blessed mother was a Saxon, and she has her mother's hair."

"It's long, too, I suppose," pursued the courier. "It seems all coiled round and round, so."

"Long! I believe you. Pull that bodkin out, Kätchen, and let the Herr see its length."

And, as Kätchen hesitated, he took the pins out with his own hand, and the great silky plaits tumbled down over her shoulders.

"Unplait it, child. It's nearly twice as long when it's all loose. There, Herr Laurier, did you ever see a prettier sight than that in your travels?"

The Swiss got up, and took a long soft tress in his hand, weighing it with a thoughtful look.

"Don't mind me, mam'sell; I've a daughter as old as you, at home in Lausanne. I tell you what; there's a friend of mine, a hairdresser in Paris, who would give you almost any sum you'd like to ask, for this hair. It's all the fashion just now, and they can't get enough of it anywhere."

Kätchen jumped back, and hastily twisted up her hair into one great lump, looking meanwhile half in terror, half in indignation, at the courier. But old Josef roared with laughter.

"No, no, thank you. Not to make a wig for our empress herself, God bless her! We're not so poor as that comes to, yet awhile. Don't look scared, Kätchen. I should like to see the barber who'd put scissors near your head."

"I'm not scared, father. How stupid you are! But I don't want to make a show of myself any longer, that's all."

Laurier was more a man of the world than poor Rosenheim, and had lived in it some twenty years longer, so, instead of apologising, or arguing, or retracting, he began a description of the wonderful head-dresses that the ladies wore in Paris, the fine feathers, and flowers, and jewels, which adorned their borrowed locks. And in listening to this topic of feminine interest, Kätchen had time to recover her composure, and even put in a few questions

of her own. Before the evening was over, Laurier had established himself in the good graces of both father and daughter.

"Whenever I come this way I shall certainly pay you a visit, Herr Kester," said the courier. They parted with many good wishes on both sides, and Fritz was well pleased to receive a tolerably gracious farewell from his capricious lady-love.

CHAPTER IV.

THE next day things resumed their old monotonous course at the Golden Lamb. Fritz and the friendly courier were far away on their road to Salzburg. Laurier had said that if he chanced to travel in their direction next year, he should certainly come and see the Kesters; but, meanwhile, there was all the autumn, and winter, and spring to get through. Gradually—Kätchen could scarcely trace how—it came to be no unusual thing for Caspar Ebner to drop in to the Golden Lamb of an evening, and before long it was quite an established custom for the Kesters to be taken to and from the church at Hallstadt in his boat. Little presents of flowers, and fruit, and choice cheese, or a bottle of fine Rudesheimer, were sent from the Black Eagle to the Golden Lamb; and once Herr Ebner brought out from his pocket a pair of bright gold earrings, which he begged Kätchen to accept. But these she refused. And the refusal brought on an argument which ended in a formal offer of Caspar Ebner's hand and heart. "Herr Ebner," said Kätchen with a gasp, "you can't be in earnest!"

"Not in earnest, Katerina! Is it possible that you have been blind to my feelings all this time? Can you honestly say so?"

"Well, I fancied, perhaps, that you liked me a little, and—thought me pretty; but I never believed that you really—really—" And Kätchen began to cry. Why *would* people be so tiresome, and serious, and in earnest? Ebner was terribly distressed at sight of her tears.

"My child, my child," said he, "pray don't cry in that way. I wouldn't grieve or vex you for more than I can tell. Try to think seriously of what I have said to you. I love you, Katerina, better than I believe you will ever be loved again."

"But I d—don't love you," sobbed Kätchen.

"I don't expect you should, all at once. Indeed no. I am twenty years older than you, my child, and staid and dull in your eyes. But I will be kind to you—oh, Kätchen, if you will let me, I will be so kind to you! You shall be mistress of everything I possess, and your father shall have a home with us whilst he lives. I have plenty."

"But I am quite, quite poor. I have not a kreutzer of dowry. Perhaps you didn't know?" And the blue eyes looked up into Herr Ebner's spectacles with a naïve expression of wonder. The spectacles flashed all over their unmeaning surface as he shook his head, but the eyes behind them were very soft and tender when he answered:

"I did know, I do know; but, my child, no riches could make you more dear to me."

Kätchen had a heart, in spite of her frivolity, and it was touched by the generosity and disinterested affection of her middle-aged suitor. But to marry him! Ah, that was another thing! And then there was Fritz. No, it couldn't be. But Ebner refused to take her answer at once. He would give her a week to consider of his proposal, and meanwhile would not obtrude himself on her in any way. "Only," said he, as he went away, "do try to be good to me, my child—*try* to be good to me."

When old Josef Kester heard of the proposal, he was elate with joy and pride.

"Ain't you astonished, father?" said Kätchen.

"Astonished? Not a bit of it. I saw, long ago, that the man was desperately in love with one of us two, and I naturally supposed it to be you."

But his pleasure was suddenly quenched when his daughter protested that, though she felt deeply grateful to Herr Caspar Ebner, and proud of his good opinion, she could never consent to be his wife. At first Josef treated this as mere childish folly that meant nothing. But the more he argued, and the angrier he grew, the more obstinate became Kätchen's opposition. So at last he took refuge in his old system of letting her take her own way—for the present.

Two or three days of the week went by, and Kätchen had by no means made up her mind as to the answer she should give Caspar Ebner. Her father's tactics of non-opposition were beginning to tell. She thought of the grandeur that lay at her feet, ready to be picked up. The fine clothes, the servants, the importance, the chance of travel, perhaps even of seeing Vienna—all these temptations crowded through her mind pell-mell. And then, duty to her father! Ought not *that* to weigh with her? In the midst of her indecision came a letter from Fritz. That is to say, a letter written by some friend at Fritz's dictation, for his own calligraphic powers extended only to the crooked signing of his name. A letter from Fritz! She had never received one from him before.

"My own Kätchen. I am right glad that I can send you this letter. A trusted friend here at Salzburg writes it down, but the words are all my own. You seemed somewhat cold when I saw you last; but I fear I was to blame. To confess the truth, I was jealous of the landlord of the Black Eagle. Yes indeed. Was I not a fool? Just as if you would think of him! But true love is always kin with jealousy, they say. I know your worth, my angel, and feel sure of your fidelity. But only I would advise, go not too often to Herr Ebner's house. Folks will talk else. I shall see you, please Heaven, early in the year. Meanwhile, forget me not."

"Thine, ever loving,

"FRITZ ROSENHEIM.

"Greet thy father heartily for me."

Kätchen was as uncertain as the sea in her moods; and this unlucky letter sent her into a

most hard-hearted and contemptuous frame of mind. "He is sure of me, is he? Could he say more if we had been betrothed before the whole village? And why *shouldn't* he be jealous, indeed? As if it were impossible to love any one better than him! Advises me not to go to the Black Eagle! It's downright insolent. I know very well what I'm doing." And so she worked up her wrath to boiling-point. On a sudden she crushed the offending letter in her hand, and ran down to the water's brink, where her father was pottering about the old boat, trying to mend it in an awkward, unworkmanlike way. He looked tired and aged, and conscious of waning strength and failure in his attempt. His clothes were very threadbare and shabby. His broad placid forehead was puckered up into ignoble cross lines. The down-hill path was getting steeper and steeper; the downward pace quicker and quicker. Tears came into Kätchen's eyes as she looked at him, and, with an impulse born of many mingled emotions, she ran to him, and putting her hands on his shoulders, said, "Father, would you really like me to marry Herr Ebner? Would it make you happy?"

"Child! it is as if you had dropped from heaven! I was just brooding over a tangled web of troubles, and thinking that there was but one way to unravel them, and that you wouldn't take that way, when behold, you come with the welcomest words on your lips that I've heard this many a long year."

"Would it really and truly make you happy, father?"

"Happy! More happy than I thought ever to be again, child."

"Then I will," said Kätchen, in a low voice.

Josef kissed his daughter, and blessed her, but repressed any exuberant demonstrations of joy, although he could have leaped and shouted aloud. Thought he: "If I say too much, she'll begin to argue on the other side, and change her mind altogether." Josef was growing cunning.

CHAPTER V.

Nor to be tempted to break his word to Kätchen, Herr Ebner had gone away from Gossau, thus leaving her quite free and unmolested for her week of consideration. Had Ebner been on the spot, Josef Nester would have stolen up to the Black Eagle to give him the good tidings secretly. As it was, he had no choice but to wait until the end of the week. The days passed slowly with him, but to Kätchen they seemed to fly past with unwonted rapidity. She sat idly dreaming from morning to night, scarcely making a pretence of turning the great spinning-wheel, before which she sat nearly all day. The servant girl was indignant, and complained that all the work fell on her shoulders; but old Josef bade her hold her tongue, and gave hints of some grandeur that was shortly to befall the family, to which Liese listened open-mouthed. At length dawned Saturday morning. The year was well advanced now. Cold winds, chilled by the mountain snows, rushed across the lake and whistled in the scanty foliage, stripping the boughs barer and barer at

every gust. The early morning hours were raw and comfortless, although towards mid-day the sun gained power and brightness. When Kätchen arose that Saturday morning she felt as though a tight hand were pressing on her heart. "I must decide—I must decide!" These words rang in her ears as if another had spoken them aloud, but they were only uttered by her own anxious thoughts. She came down to prepare breakfast so pale and heavy-eyed that even slow-witted Liese perceived there was something wrong, and bluntly asked her young mistress what was the matter with her, for which attention Liese received a sharp snubbing. Old Kester noticed Kätchen's wan looks, but said nothing. In truth, he was a little anxious himself. She had promised to marry Herr Ebner, and that was well; but he did not wish his child to be unhappy.

"It is cold," said Kätchen, turning from the table to cower over the great cooking-stove in the kitchen. "I'm so cold, I can't eat." There she sat all the morning, idly clicking her knitting-needles now and again. Slowly the day wore on. Dinner-time came, but Kätchen was still too cold to eat, she said, though the sun was high in the heavens. She tasted a few spoonfuls of soup, and then wrapped a warm cloak around her and went out. It was impossible, she said to herself, to sit there any longer, fancying every step to be Ebner's, and expecting to see him each time the latch clicked. Kätchen wandered down to the lake's brink, where a pile of fuel was stacked, and sat down on some logs, just as she had done that Sunday at Hallstadt. She thought of that day, and of the many subsequent days when she had received kindness from Caspar Ebner, and she remembered the high character he bore, and his reputation for honour and honesty. She summed up his good qualities in her mind one by one, and asked her heart—so she phrased it mentally—could she consent to be his wife? and something, which I too must call her heart for want of a better word, answered, "No!"

"He is far better than I—far, far better. He is true, and gentle, and generous. Can't I marry him?" "No!"

"He is a learned man compared to ignorant little me, and rich and well thought of. Can't I marry him?" "No!"

"He offers a home to father, and will smoothe his last years, and be as a son to him. Can't I marry him?" "No!"

Kätchen was aghast. She had fancied there was nothing to be done but for her to say unconcernedly, "I will have this man for my husband." To bring herself to this point might be difficult, but the point once reached, all would be settled. And now, behold, when she said "I will," some voice in her bosom answered "*I won't!*" All this time, too, the image of Fritz was haunting her brain. She tried not to think of him, and even thought she was not thinking of him; but there was his face, looking sadly and fondly at her, if she but closed her eyes an instant in her efforts at reflection. Truly this "self" of hers was a most incompre-

hensible and unmanageable antagonist, and Kätchen at last resolved to give up the struggle and float with the tide. Just as she had arrived at this philosophical decision, a footstep crushed the pebbles on the beach, and Caspar Ebner stood before her. He advanced with outstretched arms, but Kätchen jumped up with a start and made quite a leap backwards.

"Did I frighten you, Katarina?" said Ebner, a little crestfallen.

"No, only you came sudden like."

"Are you not cold here, sitting still? The air blows chill from the lake. Will you walk a little way with me?"

Kätchen's knees trembled as she complied with his request. She was in a nervous fever of apprehension, but Ebner did not at once broach the important topic. This was a respite, but then she almost wished he would plunge boldly into the subject, waiting was so dreadful. She had not to wait long, however.

"Kätchen," said Ebner, when they had walked a few yards side by side, "have you thought of what I said to you?"

"Yes," said Kätchen, in a faint little voice.

"I kept my word, did I not? I went away and left you quite free." No answer.

"Kätchen, may I hope you have a kind word to say to me? It will be easy for you, but, oh, how precious to me!"

"It—it isn't easy," said Kätchen, with a childlike catching of her breath.

"Well, no; perhaps not quite easy for a young maiden to say; but you will say it, eh, Kätchen? You will tell me that you will be my wife, my treasure, my darling, the mistress of my home?" And he caught her two cold little hands in his, bending down his tall form so as to look into her face. The action roused Kätchen into energy. She wrenched away her hands, though he held them in a strong grasp, and clasped them before her tearful eyes.

"No, no, no, I can't. Indeed—indeed I can't. Don't be angry with me; I am grateful indeed. You are very kind and very generous, but I can't marry you." And she sobbed as though she would choke. Ebner stood and looked at her. A hundred thoughts rushed through his mind, but he could find only one word.

"Why?" he said, jerking the syllable dryly out of his throat.

"Because I—I can't," sobbed Kätchen.

It did not sound logical, but it was true.

"You can. If you choose to say yes, you can, unless there is some one else that you love." Ebner's throat seemed to get drier and drier, and the words came huskily. Kätchen caught at them. They seemed to offer a tangible reason.

"There is some one who loves me very much—" she began, and then stopped short. Ebner's brow darkened into a frown, and he looked sternly at the weeping girl.

"You have deceived me, then," said he, at last.

"I trusted in you. I saw you were childish, but I did not think you dishonourable."

"Dishonourable! Oh dear, oh dear, what makes you say such things, and look like that?"

"Yes, dishonourable. I repeat it. Cruel and heartless. You have been playing with me; drawing me on, and all the while you were the promised wife of another man. Why did you not tell me so at once, honestly?"

"But I'm not," retorted Kätchen, roused to anger in her turn. She was in the wrong, but that did not make her the less angry. "I'm not his promised wife, and how dare you say so? I'll never have him. I don't love him, nor you, nor anybody. I wish I had never been born, I do. You're all cruel and unkind, and I hate you, every one!" Kätchen wrapped her cloak over her head, and ran off sobbing, with her apron at her swollen tear-stained eyes. Ebner was astounded. Was this his sweet, bright, good-humoured Kätchen? This pettish, passionate, unreasonable girl? Caspar Ebner was in love, it was true, but then he had just been refused; and that, perhaps, helped to make him clear-sighted. At all events, he did perceive that Kätchen had been strangely wayward, capricious, and, he thought, deceitful. When a man seriously means to ask a girl to be his wife, it is difficult to persuade him that she is not fully aware of his intention. He could not but believe that Kätchen had understood his feelings from the first, and now she cast him off, and told him of some one else who loved her. His amour propre was deeply hurt. In truth, Ebner had not been at all unconscious of the advantages which Kätchen would have derived from his alliance. She was penniless, burdened with a shiftless old father, and in a humble rank of life; but if she had consented to marry him, he would never have made her feel these things by word or deed. Now they came vividly before his mind. He had been willing to give up his easy selfish bachelor life, to raise this ignorant little peasant girl to be the mistress of his home; more than willing, eager to do so, but now under the shock of her unreasonable behaviour, he said to himself that it would have been a sacrifice. And so he walked slowly home, scorching out the pain of disappointed love with the heat of his angry resentment. But, alas! the anger would soon pass, and leave the wounded heart still smarting.

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